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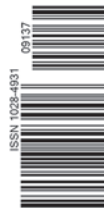
TESTED: MAZDA'S IMPRESSIVE CX-5 CROSSOVER

Mercedes-Benz's all-new GLC and GLE driven
Living with a Pajero. Seven years of ownership
Into a Super Pod: Deep-sea diving with Land Rover
We drive Volvo's much-anticipated XC90 luxury SUV
Scott Ramsay speaks to photographer Greg Du Toit

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SEPTEMBER 2015
ISSUE NO. 137

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Issue No 137
September 2015

COVER STORY **20 KIA SEVEN7 DRIVE**

Three travellers, seven days, seven countries, 7000km. We recently travelled through South Africa, Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Swaziland and Lesotho in a new Kia Sorento. We did it all in seven days, all in aid of kids with cancer. Turn to page 20 to read all about the adventure.

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Photographing people

It was with great interest that I read Johan Badenhorst's article in the August issue of *Leisure Wheels*. He questioned the ethics behind photographing local people during overland travels, and I must admit that I have often wondered about the same thing.

Is it okay to photograph people when you are travelling overland through Africa? I have noticed that local residents of some countries are far more willing to be photographed than others. The people of Mozambique, for example, generally do not seem to like being photographed. On the other hand, those in Uganda, which I visited a few years ago on a gorilla-tracking adventure, seem more than willing to pose for pictures.

It is obviously important to respect the wishes of those who don't want to be photographed, but what about those who agree? Is it morally acceptable to take their pictures?

The fact is that when we take pictures of locals during our travels, especially if they are dressed in traditional clothing, we treat them as curiosities – objects to be documented. We know nothing about these people and seldom even ask their names. We simply take their pictures to show the folks at home the “weird” people and places we encountered during our overland journey.

I can't help feeling that it is disrespectful to take pictures of these “other” people and their small homes and often difficult living conditions.



Generally speaking, our photography isn't aimed at genuine understanding of people. We do not treat them as subjects of our images – we treat them as objects. We snap a few photographs, jump into our 4x4s, and move on. How do the people at the other end of our lenses experience this intrusion?

It is no accident, I believe, that we refer to snapping a picture as “taking” a photograph. It is an intrusive act that, if not handled with compassion, negates a person's humanity.

David West, via e-mail

Unlicensed drivers

Over the past few months quite a few articles have touched on road safety, “Speed kills” and related subjects, including idiotic and uninformed legislation intended to curb the carnage on our roads.

I travelled between Pretoria and Johannesburg for six years and currently work in Witbank, which means I travel on the N4 regularly. Allow me to share a few (informed) observations.

The biggest problem is not speeding, the poor state of our roads, the wrecks that are being used on the roads, or even the willingness of officials to let you off for the price of a cold drink. The biggest problem is that there are many drivers who don't have any idea of the rules and regulations and display an ignorance and arrogance that is simply stunning.

Why? Because they bought their licences and did not study any of the laws, rules and regulations, and don't even understand the meaning of road signs. And then they are let loose to practise their non-existent skills and actually learn to drive on the Ben Schoeman Highway, N4 and N12.

When we are able to address this and actually get people to study and write a test on the road laws, as well as foster respect for the next road user, a lot of the problems will be solved.

So, yes, corrupt officials should be weeded out, traffic departments need to be restructured and re-staffed with less corrupt people and traffic laws should be enforced, but from where I sit, the unlicensed drivers are responsible for the biggest share of the damage.

Thanks for your excellent magazine. I thoroughly enjoy it every month and appreciate the opportunity to vent some of my frustrations as a road user.

Willie Venter, Pretoria

Dust problems

I am a regular reader of your great magazine. Your test reports are most informative, but I have one query. No mention is ever made of the degree of dust-proofing in tested vehicles. I believe that would be an important factor to pay attention to, as most of these vehicles will at some stage be used on dusty roads.

Dust entering through the tailgate is especially important, because if dust enters, exhaust fumes can also enter through there.

Your comments would be appreciated.

Robert Cooke, via e-mail

That's a good point, Robert. We haven't commented on dust-proofing because it hasn't been a problem on a test vehicle for some time now, including double-cab bakkies.

The most recent occurrence was in a Renault Duster in Namibia, but it was only a small amount of dust that accumulated over a 6000km journey.

In our experience, the modern car is very well insulated against dust because it is one of the important factors when vehicles are brought to our part of the world by manufacturers during their exhaustive testing routines. – Ed

More from Ford fan

I enjoy reading everything in your wonderful magazine, especially articles and road tests by Gerhard Horn and Gert van Rooyen, with his superb photography.

Allow me to share a few facts about the name, Touareg. A good few years ago, it was adopted for Volkswagen's big, capable SUV. However, back in 1978 Ford of Europe stuck that name (without the o) on a Mk 1 Fiesta concept, which never made it to production, although it was co-developed by Italian styling house Ghia. It looked macho, but was front-wheel drive and powered by a 1.1-litre engine and had only a four-speed gearbox. Pity.

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WHEN PERFORMANCE MATTERS MOST CHOOSE

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Ford Ghia's 1978 concept: Tuareg

In the sixties, Ford Cologne used the slogan "Ford weist den weg" (Ford shows the way). Toyota later adopted their similar slogan, "Toyota leads the way".

Eben Delpont and his big, powerful and trusty Nissan Patrol, still with its solid front axle, have proved its indestructible reliability over countless extreme trips into the wilderness. My question is, why do many people underrate it? (Eben excluded!)

The same goes for the Ford Everest with its big and boxy shape, tested to the limit on numerous occasions by Scott Ramsay in his "Year in the Wild" series of articles. Will the all-new model change perceptions? You bet!

Even Mercedes Benz is reported to be developing its own double-cab bakkie for release around 2018.

In *Bakkie & Truck* magazine, I read an interesting comparison test between the all-new Mercedes V-Class 250 BlueTech, the Volkswagen 2.0 BiTDI Caravelle 4 Motion and the Ford Tourneo 2.2 TDCi Custom.

True to tradition, the Benz is ultra sophisticated, costing a cool R782 416. The Caravelle T-5 costs R784 050 and the Tourneo a mere R437 900. For around R350 000 less, it would definitely do the trick for me!

W Dyck, Vryheid

Poor sales experience

I am an avid reader of your magazine and can only compliment you on the layout and substance of the publication.

I read with interest your article on the Subaru Outback under the heading, "Long-term update". You note that, in your opinion, the number of units which Subaru sells compared with main stream offerings is shocking.

I have owned a Subaru and was highly satisfied with the quality and performance. I have, over the years, not read any reports about Subaru owners who were dissatisfied with the product, so there must be another reason why the sales figure is so low.

About six weeks ago, I considered trading in my present vehicle (a Jeep V8) on a new vehicle. One of those I considered was the Subaru Forester.

I approached the new car sales division, based in Cullenburg, Cape Town. The salesman examined my Jeep, took it for a test drive and indicated that he would contact me the following day with a trade-in value.

Needless to say, the salesman did not contact me the next day; nor have I heard from him since.

While I realise there is a limited market for a V8 vehicle and that the trade-in value is low as a result, I find it difficult to accept that a salesman who has no knowledge of the customer's financial position should take it upon himself not to advise the potential customer of the trade-in value which would be offered.

So it is just possible that the performance of sales staff is the answer to the question raised in your article.

Matthew Whiting, Vredehoek

Roads to explore

When I saw the picture on page 59 of your August edition, I immediately recognised the angler on the beach as my dear brother! He is a Boknes resident and excellent angler. He has won several awards and trophies from the local angling club.

When I contacted him, we had a laugh about the "snoek" on the same page. It is more likely a Cape salmon (*geelbek*) that Cheryl caught.

I visited my brother last December and took the gravel road from Boknes to Alexandria. This is a must drive for any "gravel-roadie" like myself. It is a most scenic route, with rolling hills on either side, snaking through the farmlands. It is a totally different landscape from the one you experience on any of the tar roads to Boknes.

The area offers more gravel roads for exploring in the nearby extended Addo Park.

Thank for a great, entertaining magazine.

Jannie van Vuuren, Cape Town



Cheryl's *geelbek*. We mistakenly referred to it as a *snoek* in our Boknes feature.

Crime and opportunity

I just have to say that I enjoyed TJ's Forecourt article in the last edition, about his night shift worker falling asleep.

I work a night shift and it's something I come across a lot. I don't really understand it, because if you know you're going to work at night you have to sleep during the day. It's probably not a big issue when you only have to man a counter, but what happens when you fall asleep behind the wheel of some heavy machinery? I suspect this is often the case with truck accidents. The drivers don't rest properly during the day and then fall asleep at the wheel, but I digress.

The reason I'm writing is that I couldn't help but notice that it was a crime of opportunity that TJ was referring to. The drunk guy wandered into the shop, noticed that nobody was guarding the cigarettes and proceeded to take advantage of the

→ pg 12

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opportunity he had been given by the gods of crime.

I often notice this kind of behaviour in my suburb. In fact, I reckon most car-related crimes are due to owners not noticing the same gap as the criminals.

There is a petrol station close to my house and a supermarket right next to it. It's very convenient, as you merely pop in from one to the other.

I usually park my car in the same spot each time, and I'd never had any trouble until recently. It's either that, or I simply hadn't noticed the dodgy character hanging around before.

My phone was nearly drained due to heavy use that day, so it was on charge in the car. I gave it a glance when I got out and remember thinking, "Nah, it'll be fine".

Upon my return, I saw a guy hovering around the passenger door of my car. The area was still busy, but it was very clear from his body language what his intentions were. He was just waiting for a gap in

which he could knock out the window and make off with my phone. At least he had the decency to wait until it was quiet!

As I gather from the news, certain miscreants don't even afford victims that any more. There has been an increase in reports about people getting robbed while stuck in traffic, in full view of the public. The criminals must feel secure in the knowledge that the police won't come after them for a petty crime any more...

That near miss has taught me a valuable lesson. I think we can cut down on this kind of crime by just being more aware of our surroundings. I will not leave my phone in the car again. I've even started leaving my cubby-hole open so that people can see that there's nothing worth stealing in there, anyway.

Leo Saunders, Centurion

Performance SUVs

I must say that I quite enjoyed the performance SUV shootout in the July 2015 edition of the magazine. Even though I could

never afford one of those machines, it's nice to hear what professional drivers think about them. The BMWs victory was shocking to say the least, and the fact that it outpaced even a supercharged Jeep SRT8 is testament to how glorious that turbocharged V8 is.

I've read a few other comments on these kinds of machines and the general consensus is that they don't make any sense at all. I beg to differ.

To me they make an awful lot of sense. You get a spacious car with stunning performance and handling to match. And for more or less the same price you would have paid for a coupé or sedan with the same engine. Sounds like a no-brainer to me.

Sure, a BMW M5 would likely be faster on a track, but how many drivers really take their R1 million machines to the track anyway?

Graham Booyse, via e-mail



Too good to be true

TJ recently encountered an immigrant whose life had been ruined by a huckster. It was yet another reminder that there are a lot of crooks out there...

A newly-arrived immigrant came to see me a few weeks ago. He wanted to look at my camera surveillance system regarding an incident three days earlier.

The man could not speak English very well, and had arrived in SA from Pakistan four months earlier, with his wife and two daughters. He had set up a shop and was selling second hand cellphones and accessories.

The man had met a woman who offered him a very good deal on second-hand cellphones. There is a large phone distributor located close to my service station. It sells high-end cellphones, and the woman told the immigrant that she worked there, and that they had a large quantity of cellphones less than a year old that they wanted to get rid of. He could have them for a very good price.

The immigrant saw the dollar signs. He decided that this would be a huge kick-start for his business, and readily agreed. They eventually arrived at a price of

R40 000 for 50 cellphones. He took all his available cash and borrowed another R20 000 from a micro lender to secure this fantastic deal.

The woman apparently agreed to meet the immigrant at my garage to complete the transaction, but this was where things started to go wrong.

The meeting was set for 10h00, and she arrived with the 50 phones all boxed in their correct packaging. She even took out three phones for him to test. Of course, she "randomly" selected three of the boxes and all three phones worked perfectly.

The man made sure that the other 47 boxes contained phones and, when he was satisfied, handed over his R40 000.

Predictably, when he got to his shop and unpacked all the phones, he found that he was sitting with 47 broken and useless phones.

So there he was, standing in front of me, trying to find a picture of the woman on

my CCTV footage. She had walked to and from the garage, so we had no vehicle registration to look for. A picture of her face would have to do.

After we had found her on the footage and I had helped him take a picture of her with his cellphone, he asked my advice on what he should do now that he had the picture.

I have seldom felt so sorry for an individual. He sat in my office and wept over the realisation that all his money was gone. Moreover, he now had a large debt on his hands and he did not know how he was going to pay his upcoming bills.

I can understand how someone new to SA could fall for a scam like this. Not everyone is ready for the local criminals ready to pounce on an unsuspecting immigrant.

It is important to remember the simple rule: if something seems too good to be true, then it probably is.



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"Fatal or serious injury resulting from a motor vehicle's air bags activating inappropriately is a reality caused by inferior quality nudge or bull bars, meaning it is irresponsible for owners or dealers to fit non-approved equipment",

Maxe MD Kevin White says.

"Why would anyone consciously put themselves and their families at risk by fitting an unapproved accessory to their vehicle?"



A subsidiary of Autovest, South Africa's largest original equipment manufacturer and approved supplier of automotive accessories, Maxe produces a range of bull bars, nudge bars, bumper protectors, side steps, side bars and sports / styling bars and tow bars using the highest grade of stainless steel (specifically marine grade 304) as well as in mild steel.

White says for the past 20 years the Durban-based manufacturer had placed increasing importance on the engineering and safety aspects built into its products. Backed by a 12-member strong research and development team, Maxe, working closely with the vehicle manufacturers, consistently sets new industry standards with safety at the forefront in these developments.

Nudge bars may seem like unsophisticated products anyone can make in a backyard facility, but consider the engineering that goes into the bars, and in making the brackets deform progressively – in combination with airbag deployment. Tests include measuring the bracket stress levels in a vertical (durability) and horizontal (front impact) planes; confirming the bracket durability in the most extreme off-road conditions; confirming the side step mounting bracket could withstand a vertical force while being sufficiently weak in lateral impact situations to maximise deceleration and simulating a frontal collision and airbag compatibility.

White says Maxe's national representation and sound after-sales service ensured customers had access to technical back-up and high levels of service in the market. In being original equipment manufacturers, the company's products also do not affect owners' warranties on new motor vehicles, something consumers should bear in mind when adding accessories to their vehicle.

"In being a proudly South African company Maxe prides itself in its products being locally manufactured with a high level of local content. With 20 years of experience in the business, and a strong management team I believe Maxe is well positioned to maintain its status as the Premium Automotive Accessories provider in South Africa. All our products are manufactured to an exceptionally high standard and we have sustained ISO 9001 accreditation since 2007," White says.



Maxe bars are available through the dealer network and Maxe are currently approved original equipment suppliers to Nissan, Toyota, Hyundai, Kia, General Motors, Renault, VW, Daihatsu, GWM, Ford and Mitsubishi.

Maxe has capacity for supplying and fitting branded products for consumers on demand across the country. Within the trucking industry, the company currently produce truck bars and accessories for Freightliner, UD and Scania and are developing a product range for Volvo, Mercedes Benz, Iveco, MAN, Hino and Renault.

He goes on to say that, "The company has won Toyota's Supplier Awards three times in the past four years and that Maxe is the only South African company to have air-bag compatibility (ABC) and durability testing credentials. He concludes that, "Maxe accessories are often copied, but never matched".

If you care about the safety of your family, don't compromise - insist on Maxe accessories for your vehicle.



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Hunting the hunter

On 1 July a handsome lion named Cecil was purportedly lured out of Zimbabwe's Hwange National Park onto a neighbouring farm, where he was shot with a crossbow by American dentist Walter Palmer, who paid \$50 000 for the opportunity to do so.

Cecil, a well loved wildlife attraction, had been wearing a GPS collar, and this was taken away by the hunters after he was killed.

It seems a clear case of poaching, never mind illegal hunting, and the two Zimbabweans who allegedly organised the hunt were arrested. Palmer, however, had already returned to the US.

According to a press statement by Palmer, he had no idea the hunt was illegal, but he was nevertheless roundly condemned on social media, often in the harshest terms.

Actress Cara Delevingne called Palmer "a poor excuse for a human being". Sharon Osborne, wife or rocker Ozzy, said she hoped he would lose "his home, his practice and his money". Mia Farrow, a United Nations goodwill ambassador, sent out the dentist's address on Twitter.

Spokesmen for the Ethical Treatment

of Animals said Palmer "needs to be extradited, charged and, preferably, hanged".

British journalist Piers Morgan wrote in the London *Daily Mail* that he would like to hunt Palmer so that he could stuff him and mount his head on a wall.

Did Palmer truly believe the hunt was legal, and not notice the collar until the lion was dead? It's difficult to imagine how he could not have realised that something untoward was taking place. And even if he did believe he was acting within the law the killing, beheading and skinning of Cecil is impossible to defend.

But, at the time of writing, Palmer had not yet been charged with any crime, let alone been found guilty, so it's a bit early to send a mob around to his address or demand his head on a platter.

Why did news of Cecil's fate generate so much anger? After all, in the greater scheme of things, the lion's death hardly registers as a major event. Zimbabwe is reported to have lost 80% of its wildlife to illegal hunting between 2000 and 2003. It is selling baby elephants to China and, thanks to land seizures by government, the country's

620 private game farms had been reduced to just 14 by 2007.

Palmer is the latest in a long list of "white hunters" who have paid vast sums to kill endangered animals in Africa, attracting the wrath of internet users. Property tycoon Donald Trump's sons received a lambasting online, as did Rebecca Francis and Kendall Jones, American women who posted pictures on Facebook of animals they had killed. And then there was Texan Corey Knowlton, who paid \$350 000 in May to hunt an endangered black rhino.

What seems to upset people most is the sense of entitlement displayed by the hunters. They think that their wealth and privileged status in society gives them the right to shoot endangered animals in faraway Africa, just for fun.

A photograph of a smiling hunter next to the animal that he or she has just killed is certainly an infuriating sight. Even so, I do have a problem with the level of vitriol that tends to accompany the rightful indignation of those condemning the hunters. There is much shouting, swearing and name-calling.

These sporadic uproars about heartless hunters only serve to emphasise the silence and indifference with which most crises in

Africa are met. Humans are the victims in these far more serious tragedies. Indeed, the professed concern about hunting comes dangerously close to being a new form of colonialism, placing more value on Africa's wildlife than on its people.

You now know about Cecil the Lion, but have you ever heard of Itai Dzamara? He is a Zimbabwean journalist and political activist known for his Occupy Africa Unity Square campaign against the government of Robert Mugabe. He mysteriously disappeared in March this year and is still missing. So why aren't Sharon Osborne, Mia Farrow and Piers Morgan demanding to know where he is, and seeking justice for Itai Dzamara?

Saying farewell

This is sadly my final month at *Leisure Wheels*. It is difficult to believe that I have been here for more than five years. The months and years have truly flown by. Working at *Leisure Wheels* has been an absolute pleasure, and it has afforded me opportunities to see and do some amazing things. Whoever takes my place is in for the adventure of a lifetime. I wish Jannie Herbst and the team the best of luck. I may no longer be a writer at *Leisure Wheels*, but I will always remain a faithful reader. **LW**

OUR OPINION

GG van Rooyen **Road Test Editor**
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The truth about sharks



OUR OPINION

Gerhard Horn **Features Editor**
gerhard@leisurewheels.com

I was sitting in the departures lounge at Port Elizabeth airport when the headline appeared on one of those hateful airport TV screens that give you the introductory paragraph of a news story and nothing else.

"Mick Fanning attacked by shark," it said. Apparently there was a video of the attack, but it would have to wait until I got home.

I was still recuperating from my very own shark dive expedition the day before and wasn't in the mood to watch someone getting mauled. I had started this whole diving business and I intended to keep going, whenever the opportunity presented itself.

The trick with diving is to keep all of the nasty possibilities at the back of your mind. You should definitely know what to do when things go pear shaped, but it's best not to think about all of the creatures that could harm you while you're down there.

I harboured bad thoughts on my very first dive, and went through a 12-litre air tank in 28 minutes due to rapid breathing caused by stress. A good, relaxed diver should be able to

stay down for more than an hour on that amount of air...

It doesn't help that sharks have a bad reputation. If ever there was a species that needed a good public relations campaign it's the shark, and especially the infamous great white. You'd think it savaged millions of people every year.

South Africans will know what I'm talking about. We are taught from a young age that wild animals are not to be messed with, and none more so than the lion and its sea-based murdering counterpart, the great white. Oddly, I had a close encounter with a lioness the day before I jumped into the sea, so obviously I'm not very good at listening to the advice of others.

Yes, sharks do attack people, but it's almost never intentional and the story tends to result in various websites posting articles such as "Top ten shark attack videos". People love this kind of thing, as was proved by the Mick Fanning video, which went viral in a few hours.

The facts reveal a rather different story. Sharks very rarely kill humans

and there are thousands of everyday occurrences that are much more likely to kill you, even if you take part in a spot of diving now and then.

According to Monty Halls' recent Ted Ex talk, you are 40 times more likely to be killed by a cow than by a shark, and when last did you quake in your boots at the sight of a cow at the side of the road?

My favourite fact is that you are 250 times more likely to die from an accident related to using right-handed equipment if you are left-handed than if you are a right-handed person. Other dangerous items include toasters, vending machines and beds.

You are much more likely to die as a result of your own stupidity than in a shark attack. I'm living proof (thankfully) of this concept, because I got as close as I've ever been to death's door while on the Shoals of Agulhas trip.

Believe it or not, diving in water actually dehydrates a human being much faster than usual, which means you have to drink more water. This results in the diver having to "go" more often but, unfortunately, you can't "go" in your suit, for obvious reasons.

I removed my suit for this very reason, which was an idiotic

mistake. It was extremely cold on that boat when I put the suit back on, and it was another 45 minutes before I stopped shivering.

Monty and his cameraman, Doug Allen, who has won two Emmy awards, kept piling jackets on top of me, which was deeply embarrassing because other people on the boat looked as though they were struggling more than me. Hypothermia never even crossed my mind.

Back on shore, Doug followed me all the way to the hotel room we used for changing, and proceeded to remove a naked Canadian tourist from the shower and shoved me in there. As I warmed up, I remembered the signs of hypothermia that Divetek had taught me when I took my diving course. I don't really know how bad it was, but I only started feeling my hands again after a 15-minute shower and three cups of coffee...

So I survived a month in which I flew halfway across the globe, ate some strange exotic dishes in strange places, drove more than 2000km locally and eventually went diving with sharks. And the thing that nearly got me was my own stupidity and inability to recognise signs of hypothermia. **LW**

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A 7000km Journey of hope

We recently decided to stop talking and start doing something for children with cancer. Since we don't cycle or run much, we had to find another way of attracting attention to the cause. So how about driving through seven countries in seven days, stopping over at seven hospitals or sick children along the way? That became 7000km in seven days, taking in some of the best and worst roads and mountain passes in southern Africa

Text: Danie Botha **Photography:** GG van Rooyen

A wise person once said: You never fail until you give up. No, that's not inspirational enough. What about this one from John Shipp: "Perseverance is stubbornness with a purpose."

Okay, so we had a lot of time to kill, driving 7000km. And yes, we had lots of Freudian moments in the cabin of the Kia Sorento, as you tend to have when the talk about rugby, cricket, politics, the weather and the vivacious waitress at a restaurant dries up.

But let's rewind the clock some, to put our Freudianisms in some context.

The SEVEN7 DRIVE had been born late in 2014 and it had taken all this time to put the elements in place. Or most of them.

The new Kia Sorento 2.4 had arrived on schedule with 50km on the clock. The crew at Graffiti had created a cool wrap design for the car, right on schedule. The Bridgestone all-terrain tyres had been fitted, the custom-made roof-rack mounted, a new nudge bar and Light Force spotlights added, the windows tinted, a fridge fitted and special seat covers made and fitted.

The process of transforming a city-loving Kia Sorento front-wheel drive family SUV into a bit of an overlander was complete.

The same could not be said for our intended stopovers at hospitals or sick children in the seven countries on our itinerary. Although some visits had been confirmed, contacts in Botswana, Zimbabwe, Lesotho and Mozambique had failed to come up with any leads to cancer kids who needed some help with gifts.

The gifts were not an issue, however. Friends and family rallied on social media, and along

with The Little Fighters organisation, for whom we were raising funds, a heap of toys landed up at the *Leisure Wheels* offices. They included educational toys and teddy bears.

Thanks to Little Fighters, we also had some cool packs to hand over, including toothpaste, soap and practical items such as beanies.

After growing a few more grey hairs about the situation, we eventually decided to take it as it comes. We'd try to find the needy children in those countries when we got there.

And so 1 July arrived. Ready or not, it was go-go-go time.

SEVEN7 LOG – DAY 1

(Pretoria to Windhoek, Namibia: 1812km)

Our Seven7 Drive day officially started at 3pm on 1 July. Jan van Deventer, GG van Rooyen and I reported, sheepishly, to a local hairdresser for the shearing of our heads.

In solidarity with all the kids and adults who lose their hair when they undergo chemotherapy, we shaved the hair from our heads, too. This seemed like a good idea at the time, but in the cold conditions we were about to encounter, maybe not ideal.

Our day (or night) started with a short drive from Randburg to the Steve Biko Hospital in Pretoria. There a small party of farewell sayers waited for us – representatives from Little Fighters, Kia Motors SA and a colleague from the magazine.

At 12:15, 2 July, we departed on the inaugural SEVEN7 DRIVE trip, from the street in front of the hospital. The theory behind the trip seemed valid. We were about to find out if we had any

realistic chance of actually doing 7000km in seven days. Our Freudian journey had officially commenced.

The drive in the dark was not exactly easy. After some hectic last-minute running about, there had been no time for a quick nap, so staying awake in the small hours was challenging. We changed drivers every two hours, but by the time we reached the Kalahari and our first sunrise, the mood was positively boisterous. We had made good time, and seemed to be on course to reach Windhoek around 4pm. Our average speed was 109km/h, which was very reasonable.

On the main N14 artery leading straight through the Northern Cape the 2,4-litre Sorento was in its element, happily cruising at a true 121km/h in sixth gear, despite the slightly larger all-terrain tyres and the extra wind resistance of the loaded roof-rack. Fuel consumption averaged 12,2 litres/100km.

After reaching Upington we pointed the Kia north, towards Askham and the remote Rietfontein border post. We were expecting dirt roads on the SA side, leading to Rietfontein, but clearly the world land speed record attempt at Hakskeen pan (close to Rietfontein) has seen the Northern Cape government invest in upgrading the infrastructure. There is now a beautiful new tar road all the way to the border post.

Our first border crossing went as smoothly as we could have hoped for... within 15 minutes we were in Namibia, and on our way to Aroab on a dirt road that was better than many a tarred road in SA.



The Kia Sorento on its way to Windhoek. Dirt roads were included in the route in all the countries, including some "adventurous" sections.

OVERLAND ADVENTURE SEVEN7 DRIVE



Above: It's a hair off! In solidarity with cancer fighters who lose their hair during chemotherapy treatment, the three SEVEN7 crew members shaved their heads... not such a hot idea in the middle of winter! Right: At Namibia's Rietfontein border post, you are sent to the nearby Aroab town to buy the required road permit from the Kalaharie Lafenis shop.



Left: The visit to Namibia included a 6am "live" appearance on the *Good Morning Namibia* show, talking about cancer awareness and the SEVEN7 DRIVE.

Bottom: A detour in Swaziland, where a herd of cattle had taken over the road.



were happy to entertain us and accept our gifts for all 30 kids.

It was an emotional visit, with some of the kids in no mood for a smile or a gift. The realities of cancer became all too real again and made our own frustrations about traffic and taxis and fatigue seem utterly irrelevant. Finally, by 7pm, we left the hospital and headed straight to

Interestingly, we had to acquire our Namibian road permit in Aroab. There was no time to smell the roses, and we tackled the 170km dirt road to Keetmanshoop. It was a long stretch, but the Kia was up to the task, happily and safely cruising at 110km/h.

At Keetmanshoop we got back on tar, and headed north on the last stretch to Windhoek. We would meet up with the Cancer Association of Namibia, which had arranged to take us to the Central Hospital's children's cancer ward.

Sticking to the Namibian speed limits, the clock seemed to speed up some... and by the time we reached Mariental, and with more than 200km still to go to Windhoek, it was clear we were running behind schedule, and would arrive in Windhoek after 4pm. And that was despite "winning" an hour thanks to Namibia's day-light saving time which, in winter, is one hour ahead of SA time.

When we finally reached Windhoek's outskirts, the Friday afternoon traffic loomed. It was time for our first wise man quote: "Time

is a great teacher, but unfortunately it kills all its pupils." Thanks, Hector Louis Berlioz, for that one!

After driving virtually non-stop for more than 18 hours, we smiled and waved our way to the Cancer Association of Namibia's offices in Windhoek. Okay, not really smiled so much, but we did wave at one or two taxis. It was 5pm and we had covered more than 1800km.

Our day was far from over, though. There was no answer at the offices. We rang the bell and phoned every number we could – no reply. This was frustrating, but we had not come this far to be defeated at the finishing line, so we asked the little men who live in the GPS to take us directly to the Windhoek Central Hospital.

Luckily it was not far away and after another 30 minutes of being sent from pillar to post in this state hospital (which really is in a surprisingly shocking state of disrepair) we finally landed up at the children's oncology ward. We explained who we were and our mission, and thankfully the friendly nurses

the Arrebbusch Travel Lodge, where we pitched our Terra Firma tents on a luxury campsite.

The restaurant's dinner was the best we had tasted in a while, and the beers were awesome, too. By 9pm we were ensconced in our tents and by 9:01pm we were fast asleep.

SEVEN7 LOG – DAY 2

(Windhoek to Nata, Botswana. 1172km)

4am. That's when the cellphone alarm went off! Oi, we could have easily slept till 8am!

But we had to strike camp and do the ablution rounds by 5:30am. We were due in the Namibian Broadcast Corporation studio at 6am for an appearance on the live Good Morning Namibia show. Thanks to the bearded lads in the GPS, who clearly also had a good night's rest, we arrived on time and were quickly ushered to the studio.

After the interview, we headed out of Windhoek and at 6:30am on a Saturday morning there were no traffic jams to contend with. Our next target was Nata, on the eastern



side of Botswana, close to the Zimbabwe border. So we headed east on the B6, towards Gobabis and the Buitepos border between Namibia and Botswana. By 10am we arrived at the border, and again we crossed without problems.

On the Botswana side, the A2 forms part of the Trans Kalahari Highway, and it's a reasonably quiet road. Our average speed hovered around 102km/h.

More than 200km from the border we reached a T-junction. If you want to follow the Trans Kalahari highway to SA you go right. We turned left, heading north towards Ghanzi. From there it was on past D'kar, Kuke and Toteng, and we reached the main northern town of Maun late in the afternoon.

Maun was bustling, and all the filling stations were hives of organised chaos.

Ahem, a famous quote beckoned as the GPS scrambled to calculate the new route to Gweta.

"The bad news is that times flies. The good news is that you're the pilot." Right on, Michael Althsuler! Er, or was it?

Since we still had half-a-tank of unleaded fuel we decided to avoid the chaos and make tracks for Gweta, where we could fill up. This time we ignored an old African truth: "You never drive past a filling station that has fuel without refuelling." Bah, we were the pilots, and we were in charge. So on we went.

The distance we had to cover was almost 300km. And in any case, we did have a jerry can with a couple of litres of petrol as a back-up. As the light faded and the kilometres flew by, and with nary a filling station in sight, the Kia's trip computer began to tell a worrying story.

The tired bearded men in the GPS said we had 120km to go. The unnervingly accurate trip computer said we had 120km worth of fuel left.

The situation was briefly forgotten when we came upon a small herd of elephant – next to the A3 road. A few hundred metres later we had to stop for a zebra crossing – with real live zebras. Day turned to dusk, and we still had some way to go.

Since we were not particularly keen to test the Sorento's crash worthiness against an elephant, we made good use of the Light Force LED Venom driving lights on the nudge bar. With a reach of 1,2km, they proved invaluable in picking out any movement next to the road. Eventually, though, wildlife was no longer our worry. Crawling along at 80km/h, the air-conditioning long switched off, we were running on fumes.

By then my two colleagues were making me



Left: The Kia Sorento 2.4 used an average of 12,7 litres of unleaded every 100km. This is the Caltex station in Foursburg, Free State. Below: Professor David Reynders of the Steve Biko Hospital's oncology unit in Pretoria with two of his young patients, checking out the Kia Sorento.



Jan van Deventer with little Linda Motlhasedi at the Pandamentga clinic, near the Zimbabwe border with Botswana.

recite the African saying, over and over again: "You never drive past a filling station that has fuel without refuelling."

But finally, and thankfully, the town of Gweta arrived, along with a dingy filling station.

"No cards accepted. No, we don't take Namibian dollars, either," said the attendant.

So we were pointed in the direction of a local lodge where, we were told, we could exchange Namibian dollars for pula. By then the trip computer had been stuck on "0km range" for more than 30km.

"What am I supposed to do with Namibian dollars?" asked the lady at the lodge.

So we raided our three wallets and GG's produced the good stuff – R300, and just enough pulas to get us to Nata, and the Nata Lodge.



Finally, we tackled the last 100km to Nata in the dark. We arrived at Nata Lodge just after 7pm. It had been another marathon session of more than 1200km.

We enjoyed dinner at the lodge's restaurant, and set up camp. By 10pm we were dreaming of rivers of petrol, elephants riding on a Sorento roof-rack, and a Kia steering wheel.

But Botswana had another surprise for us... just after midnight a car roared into the

OVERLAND ADVENTURE SEVEN7 DRIVE



Get a load of this

With plenty of luggage and gifts and camping gear to lug along, we needed more packing space than even the Kia's cavernous boot

(1732 litres) could offer. We did not want to take a trailer, because that would have complicated matters no end. So the only solution was to go to the roof.

However, since this Kia Sorento is brand new and there were no off the shelf roof-rack products available, we had to go the custom route. And this kind of thing is just up the alley of Weca Offroad Centre in Centurion. Measurements were taken and a custom aluminium roof-rack was manufactured inside two weeks. The rack did a great job of housing the spare tyre and plenty of other gear.

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campsite, its sound system blasting away. We had neighbours. Unfortunately, their party was far from done. The music and screaming and shouting and taunting (of other campers who dared asked them to please be quiet) kept going until 2:30am. That's when they finally shut off the music – and commenced a singing competition of their own, at the top of their lungs.

The lodge's two security guards were hiding in the main lodge. One was asleep and the other refused to shut the party down.

Suffice to say that, when the cellphone alarm sounded at 3:30am, we could not even muster a famous quote. Well, there were a few sailor-like quotes, but those are not suitable for publication.

Anyway, with less than three hours of sleep, this was day three.

SEVEN7 LOG – DAY 3

(Nata to Masvingo, Zimbabwe. 1108km)

Blithering mongrels! Yep, our third day didn't start so smartly, courtesy of the nincompoops next tree.

But we had no time to linger. We had a mission to complete. So to start this day, we dug deep, thanks to one John Heywood.

"A hard beginning maketh a good ending" – so applicable to many facets of our lives.

Thankfully, the friendly ladies at Nata's Wimpy lifted our spirits by offering hot water for our coffee flasks, and as everyone knows, coffee makes bad things fade away.

We were now heading due north to the three-horse town of Pandamatenga, 200km from Nata. The border post is just south of the famous Kazangula ferry border

crossing, and much less busy and chaotic.

But first we stopped over at the small Pandamatenga clinic, where we chatted to the health workers. It was a story we would hear many times in rural Africa:

"Cancer? No, that sickness is not here." Unfortunately, it probably is, but the know-how and infrastructure to successfully diagnose and treat cancer simply does not exist.

So we handed out some Little Fighters pamphlets that explain the symptoms and early-warning signs of cancer. Our mission had acquired an extra dimension – to make people aware of an illness called cancer.

However, over the next days we would encounter much worse conditions than we found in Botswana.

Officials on the Zimbabwe side of the border were nowhere to be found. A policeman had to go and round them up at their houses – that's how quiet this post is. Amazingly, though, it proved the most expensive border crossing of the trip – in the country that is economically in the worst state in southern Africa.

We had to pay R220 for third party insurance and about R190 (US \$15) for carbon taxes. That's more than R400. Meanwhile, back in reality, a country like Lesotho charges a total of R30, and Swaziland R50.

On the twee-spoor dirt road, leading to the main A8 to Bulawayo, we dug in the archives for a suitable quote – a Creole one, no less: "Cutting off a mule's ears doesn't make it a horse."

The Kia handled the rough track pretty well, with the combination of the pliant yet comfortable suspension and the slightly higher and more sure-footed ride afforded by the Bridgestone Dueler all-terrain tyres ensuring that we could maintain a decent enough average speed. And as a bonus, the track was basically deserted.

When we arrived at the A8 tar road the going became more testing. Traffic and pock-marked tar, as well as plenty of villages and pedestrians, as well as numerous, nonsensical "toll gates" that charge a flat rate of \$1 (about R12.50) slowed us down.

We were relieved to reach Bulawayo, but by now we were running behind schedule and our plan to reach Masvingo before dark. And then, a new calamity: petrol. In Bulawayo, the filling stations don't accept fuel cards, nor any currency other than US dollars. So the only solution was to draw dollars from a teller, which took some finding. Finally, after wasting 45 minutes, the Kia's tank was full and we could head out on the A9 towards Masvingo.

The going was slow. Our estimated time of arrival in Masvingo was 8pm, said the GPS, so there could be no hospital visits that day. We just had to ride it out



Operation Heavy! Getting up Sani Pass in a front-wheel drive SUV was always going to be challenging. And considering all the weight in the boot, the front wheels would have had a tough time finding traction on the slippery, steep pass. So we moved all the heavy items on the roof-rack forward as far as possible, deflated the front Bridgestone ATs to 1 bar and inflated the rear ones to 3 bar – and up we went!



Six-year-old Bongumusa Dvuba and his granny, Florence Shongwe, started walking at 9am from their house in Swaziland to meet the team at 4pm in the afternoon. The crew handed over some groceries for Florence and cool gifts for Bongu, who is HIV positive. Below: Sorting gifts at the Windhoek Central Hospital.

and find a place to sleep.

Soon it was dark. There was plenty of traffic on the twisty road, but we had no option but to stick it out.

We did reach Masvingo by 8pm. Those little men in the GPS had been right – again. We headed for the Great Zimbabwe Hotel, just outside town. We still needed to pitch camp, eat and catch up on some sleep.

Richard Branson said: “You don’t learn to walk by following rules. You learn by doing, and by falling over.” Oh, whatever.

The friendly man at reception recognised the dread of setting up camp on our faces. We asked for a campsite, nonetheless.

“Wait, wait, wait gentlemen. Let me see how I can help you,” he said, dramatically pausing as he pretended to make sums on a calculator. “When my boss sees this price he will probably chase me away, but I can give you this family room for... just \$110.”

Our carefully manicured budget had already been violated. So we took his offer.

Although the meal in the hotel’s restaurant was less impressive than the receptionist’s sales skills, we hardly cared.

That night we slept like babies.

SEVEN7 LOG – DAY 4

(Masvingo to Maxixe, Mozambique. 926km)

That cellphone alarm is an annoying contraption! At 4am it started blaring again.

We dragged ourselves out of bed, showered, had some so-so coffee – and hit the road east towards Mozambique. But we still needed to find a hospital or sick children in Zim, too. And so, a few hours later, after driving on some awful roads, we landed up at the District Hospital in the town of Chipinge.

Over the previous days we had seen medical



That’s rather steep! And slippery! But with a good helping of momentum, the Kia Sorento scrambled its way up the Sani Pass.

Fast facts

- We completed a total of 16 border crossings in seven days
- We travelled 7081km at an average of 1011km a day.
- The price of fuel varied greatly in the different countries. In SA the going rate was around R14,35/litre of unleaded petrol. In Namibia it dropped to R11,49, and in Botswana it was even better at an amazing R10,03. Zimbabwe proved the most expensive at R17,41/litre. That’s R7,38 more expensive per litre than it was in Botswana!
- Zimbabwe also proved to be the most expensive for road taxes and other charges. You have to pay a ridiculous “carbon tax” levy according to your vehicle’s engine size, which meant our total expenses just to drive on Zimbabwe’s roads were R410. Namibia charged R262 for its cross border permit, while Mozambique’s third party insurance amounted to R220. Botswana’s levy was R187,50 (which included a road permit, road fund and insurance). Swaziland charged a R50 permit fee and Lesotho just R30.
- In all of 7000km we had to deal with just one bad-tempered border official (in Mozambique), and one attempted case of bribery. Unfortunately, and sadly, this happened in SA, after we crossed back from Swaziland. We had admittedly exceeded the speed limit (on a road where the 80km/h limit was unreasonable). We were happy to take the fine on the chin. However, the traffic officer asked, “So what can you do for us to make this problem go away?” Colleague Jan van Deventer was driving at the time and the officer probably saw the blood boil under his skin, so he told Jan to “just go”.

OVERLAND ADVENTURE SEVEN7 DRIVE



Call home

Communication in the middle of nowhere was essential, and satellite service provider Zippisat provided us with the latest in satellite

phone and data connections. With these units we were able to send updates via SMS and also log into the internet when we were stationary, with the satellite data system. However, the satellite coms would have proved most valuable in an emergency, and thankfully we did not have one.

If you want to stay in contact in areas where cellphone signals are just a rumour, look no further than Zippisat.

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www.zippisat.com



From Russia, with love!

Driving 7000km in just seven days meant the crew had to virtually live in the Kia Sorento's cabin for those seven days. So we needed some seat covers to protect the original upholstery from coffee spills (a very real issue when you try to drink a cuppa on a pothole-infested road!).

Enter Tonneau King's new seat cover range. The tough material is imported from Russia and the covers are custom-made locally. With a unique 500 000km warranty there are several options available, including Sport and Standard designs.

Our seat covers came with extra padding and the Seven7 Drive logo embroidered into the head rests. The seats proved extremely comfortable, and when we did manage to spill some coffee they simply wiped clean with a damp cloth. These covers were a real asset on our adventure!

More information:
www.tonneauking.co.za;
Tel. 012 997-4544

facilities in dire need of upkeep, but this hospital was in terrible shape. From the outside some of the wards looked like derelict, abandoned structures. But inside those scarred walls were people. Lots of people.

We spent an hour being sent from this person to that person, who phoned this person and that person. Granted, it was a Sunday morning, and we had not made prior arrangements.

Finally, the doctor in charge arrived and proved to be a perfectly hospitable chap. He explained that we needed to obtain a letter of approval from the Department of Health before he could allow us

to hand out gifts to any children. And they had no cancer patients there, either. It was frustrating, but also understandable. If something is not done "by the book", then there could be trouble for the people involved.

So we bade the doctor farewell after dropping off some cancer awareness pamphlets. At least we now knew who to contact in future.

We still had gifts to hand out in Zimbabwe but no one to give them to. So we headed further east from Chipinge. Soon, our jaws dropped in sheer amazement. We were driving through a jungle! A jungle where Tarzan would have been quite at home. And in that jungle we chanced upon the Mount Selinda Hospital.

The staff were amazing. Instead of being suspicious and cautious about us, they welcomed us with open arms and took us to their children's ward. There we handed out packets of gifts, as well as the awareness pamphlets. This positive interaction lifted our spirits. It was just what we needed to keep on plugging away at the kilometres.

We crossed into Mozambique at the Mount Selinda border post, and it was quite a welcome. In a first for all of us, the policeman on duty at the tiny post shook each of us by hand and welcomed us to Mozambique in a most jovial fashion. The formalities were quickly taken care of, and off we went.

But we had only gone about 50m when two young soldiers with AK47s stopped us. They insisted on checking through everything, requiring us to open the boxes on the roof-rack. It was a complete waste of time, and had us worried about the rest of our drive in Mozambique.

Thankfully GG pointed out that a Kia Sorento sporting teddy bears and pink hearts and



Top: There are about 30 children in the Windhoek Central Hospital's oncology department, and each one received a gift. The staff were friendly, cheerful and positive – just what the kids needed! Above: The state hospital in Chipinge, Zimbabwe, has seen (much) better days. The travellers found that they needed written permission from the health department to hand out gifts there, so unfortunately the patients missed out.



Above: Jan van Deventer with Harriet Doughty at the Touching Tiny Lives complex in Mokhotlong, Lesotho. With them is Lineo, a toddler with Down's Syndrome – a rare condition in this community. It's so rare, in fact, that the family members looking after the orphaned Lineo believed her to be possessed by evil spirits, and she was badly neglected. Touching Tiny Lives intervened and things are now on the up for little Lineo.

rainbows should deter potential fortune hunters. He was right. Three men in a car with teddy bears could hardly pose a threat to national security!

The day of emotional roller coasting continued once we had cleared the army check point. Instead of rough gravel we found a brand new tar road, snaking its way through the mountains. Okay, so it would probably only last a few kilometres, we reckoned. But it went on and on, turn after beautiful turn.

And so we made good headway to reach the main EN1 "highway" just after midday. Up to October 2014 this section of the EN1, north of the Save River, was under attack by rebel forces. The only way to traverse this section was in a military convoy, which only ran the gauntlet a few times in a day. Miss the convoy, and you didn't go anywhere.

Thankfully the warring parties had smoked the peace pipe since then and the highway is open and safe again. But let's just clarify one thing: this highway is not a highway like the N1. It is mostly a strip of tar in the middle, just wide enough for one bus. There are broken, ragged edges of tar along the sides, at the ready to rip wheels clean off cars.

Here the buses come at you from the front at 130km/h. There is no sharing of that tar strip, either. The bigger vehicle has the right of way, while the other one has to do an emergency lane change onto the gravel shoulder, over those jagged tar ruts.

Make no mistake, the Kia Sorento inevitably took some shots as we tried to not become embedded in a speeding bus's grille. A few times, taking those heavy blows, we felt sure that something must have broken, but the Korean SUV and the Japanese tyres kept on taking the shots on the chin.

We crossed the Save River's famous bridge late in the afternoon, relieved that we had got through this section without major drama. And south of the river, the road looked in much better condition. Apparently the roads are maintained by the relevant provinces, so you'd be driving on a horrible section and then be greeted by a beautiful new tar road, only to soon be back on a pothole-infested section.

There was lots of traffic, as well as pedestrians and cyclists. Amazingly, the pedestrians and cyclists

seemed oblivious to the cars, trucks and buses. The pedestrians looked neither left nor right, and just dashed out into the road in front of you. We had to call on the ABS brakes at least three times to avoid an accident – a bizarre state of affairs.

Anyway, our average speed was taking a knock. The men in the GPS were distressed, and gave our ETA at Maxixe as 7pm. It was the shortest day by

distance, but certainly the toughest to drive.

As darkness closed in, a pertinent quote from Archimedes came to mind: "The shortest distance between two points is a straight line." Heck yes!

We arrived in Maxixe just after 7pm, and we could just imagine those guys in the GPS with their maps flapping about, all shouting together: "We told you so!"

We had arranged to stay over at friends of compatriot Jan van Deventer, and were spoiled with our first home-cooked meal of the trip. It was too late to visit the child our contacts had arranged for us to meet, so we entrusted the handover procedure to Jan's friends.

That night we had an interesting chat about Mozambique and cancer. The state of the country's health system is certainly a reason for concern. Some towns have modern clinics that are fitted with the latest equipment, but sometimes there are no trained staff to use the machines.

Malaria is a major factor in Mozambique, but it has apparently become common practice for deaths of various causes to be attributed to malaria. "Heart problems" is said to be the second-most prevalent cause of death. So again, instead of just finding cancer patients, our focus was on awareness and information for the future.

We fell asleep in our comfortable beds, next to the Indian Ocean. Life was looking up.

SEVEN7 LOG – DAY 5

(Maxixe to Manzini, Swaziland. 781km)

3:30am. The alarm has sounded but colleague GG is already in the shower. We were getting into the swing of things, it seemed!

By 4:02am we are on the road, keen to arrive at our destination in daylight, for once. It was the shortest day of the trip, but we still had to negotiate the chaotic Maputo traffic – and we had been warned this could take up to two hours if we stuck to the main EN1 road. But long before we got there, we were amazed to find an army road block, at 4:30am. Thankfully there were no problems. We thought this was possibly due to the fact the two soldiers were temporarily blinded by our Light Force spotlights! Anyway, we



Get a grip

The Kia Sorento 2.4 LS was originally fitted with 17-inch alloy wheels with 235/65 R17 highway terrain tyres. Although these tyres are perfectly suited to the Sorento SUVs role as a city runabout for the family with occasional dirt road duty, we needed to upgrade the rubber to handle the potholes we were bound to encounter, as well as provide more grip for the ascent up the Sani Pass.

We had a brief look at 17-inch mud terrain options, but these tyres normally cause a fair amount of road noise, and were also a slight overkill for the dirt and sand roads we had in mind. So we knocked on Bridgestone SA's door, and they came up with a perfect compromise: the company's latest Dueler 697 all-terrain. This tyre is the company's latest all-terrain product, said to combine comfort and performance, both on tar and in an off-road environment.

So the stock highway terrain tyres were replaced with 235/65 R17 all-terrains, which come with a slightly higher profile (and a very slight increase in diameter as well as a millimetre or two more clearance).

The tyres, fitted onto the original rims, filled the wheel arches most elegantly. And in 7000km of rough road driving, we did not have a moment's trouble with the tyres.

On Sani Pass we dropped the front tyre pressure to 1 bar and inflated the rear tyres to 3 bar and up she went – no worries.

More information:

www.bridgestone.co.za

OVERLAND ADVENTURE SEVEN7 DRIVE

were quickly sent on our way. Several more road blocks followed, but we had no issues. Things were really looking up!

By mid-morning we had reached the outskirts of Maputo, and the traffic was crazy. We diverted to the town of Matola, to the west. The little men in the GPS were confused. There were a lot of new roads being constructed in this area that they did not seem to know about. The female announcer kept repeating, "Recalculating... recalculating".

Diligence is the mother of good luck, Ben Franklin said. And finally, after an hour of dodging taxis and other road users, we broke free of the bustling metropole's clutches.

We aimed for the tiny Goba border post, instead of Namaacha. But the Mozambique official at this gate took the award for the rudest, most unfriendly customs official we encountered – the complete opposite of the official who had welcomed us to his country the day before.

There is no point in getting upset, we knew, so we had a good chuckle instead. But it was a disappointing way to leave Mozambique.

The service on the Swaziland side made up for it. There, the friendly young lady greeted us with a smile and efficient service.

Soon we were heading towards Manzini –

ahead of schedule! We stopped in the town to buy supplies for a braai, which we had been looking forward to for a while! But Murphy, of course, always has to have a say. The GPS had no idea where Wide Horizons, our stopover for the night, was. Nor did anyone we asked. For some reason we could not even make a phone call. So there we were, within 30km of our destination and a young patient – and we had no idea how to get there!

Eventually a friendly local helped us find the website on her smart phone, and she directed us in the general direction of Wide Horizons. To cut a long story short, we arrived at the beautiful Wide Horizons with about 30 minutes of daylight to spare.

And there we found six-year-old Bongumusa Dvuba, and his grandmother, Florence Shongwe. He had been orphaned by HIV/Aids and is cared for by his granny. They had started walking from their home at 9am to meet us there.

Again, as colleague Jan handed over the gifts for Bongu and the foodstuffs we had bought for Florence, the look on their faces made it all worthwhile.

Later, chatting to Rose Roques of Wide Horizons, a completely different health situation in Swaziland emerged, compared with those in

the other countries. Here HIV/Aids is the biggest killer by far. In fact, it's a pandemic. About 25% of adults are infected. Although cases of cancer are diagnosed, the disease is often related back to the fact that HIV affects the immune system and makes people more susceptible to life threatening diseases such as cancer.

Bongu, who is HIV-positive, is on anti-retroviral drugs, and he says that since he's been taking the medication he feels much better and is able to live almost like a normal six-year-old.

After bidding Bongu and Florence farewell, we made our way to our campsite, negotiating a steep gradient along the way. Oh boy! The front wheels were spinning on the loose surface. This was not looking promising for the steep and slippery Sani Pass, which we had to tackle the next day!

Anyway, we had a great view, great wine, a great fire and great steaks. It was a good day. A really good one.

Heading up Sani Pass with a good dollop of momentum! Despite some reservations, even among the crew members, the Kia Sorento 2.4 LS did an outstanding job on the Drive, proving 100% reliable and up for the game. A bonus was the comfort of the cabin. Driving 7000km in seven days can take a heavy toll on bodies, but the crew were never uncomfortable in the spacious cab.





The Touching Tiny Lives complex in Mokhotlong, Lesotho, was established after a family abandoned an orphan baby, leaving him outside in a thunder storm to die. Bottom: On a short detour in Botswana we came across a group of kids, playing next to the road... so we redistributed some teddy bears.

SEVEN7 LOG – DAY 6

(Manzini to Sani Mountain Lodge, Lesotho. 653km)

Camping and this SEVEN7 DRIVE business just don't work so well, we realised at 4am next day. Striking camp and packing everything away in the cold night air was just not pleasant or time efficient.

We were on the road by 5am. It was a late start, but it was the shortest leg of the trip, at just over 600km. But there was the small matter of a large mountain on our way to Lesotho.

We aimed for the mainstream Oshoek border post with SA, which opened at 7am. And when we arrived there, it looked as though we had made a terrible blunder... there was a queue of cars and taxis, and people lined up at the gate. Oh dear! This was not going to take 10 minutes! But amazingly, despite the crush we were through in 25 minutes. Phew!

Shortly afterwards, driving on a beautiful new tar road through the mountains, we were caught in a speed trap. It turned out to be the only case of attempted bribery on our entire trip – and sadly it happened in our own country. (Read more about this incident elsewhere in this feature.)

We drove through Vryheid, Dundee and Ladysmith, and finally joined the main N3 highway towards Durban. At the Howick turn-off, we turned west for Underberg, which brings us to a traditional Malay saying, "Fish don't get caught in deep water." Well, they do catch trout in the rapids here...

We now had to drive a heavily laden front-wheel drive SUV up the infamous Sani Pass, and this could either go very well, or very badly. There was no middle ground.

Stopping in the foothills of the pass, we engaged in

Operation Heavy. This involved shifting all the weight in the vehicle and on the roof-rack forward as far as possible. Tyre pressures were also vital. We dropped the driven front tyre pressures to 1 bar, and inflated the rear ones to 3 bar.

On we went, climbing higher and higher. The tyre pressure trick worked on the slippery stuff, the Bridgestone ATs managing well. However, the last few hundred metres were the real test. Here the gradient increases dramatically, and the surface is as slippery as a buttered waterslide.

It was soon obvious that the only way the Kia would go up the mountain was with a good helping of momentum. So in first gear, with the four-cylinder engine revs pegged around the 6000r/min mark where 127 kilowatts preside, the Kia made its way up the steeper sections.

We got through the infamous Icy Corner, but then the road became so steep that the front wheels kept losing traction. The only way up was to keep going no matter what, swinging the steering wheel left and right to aid traction. So, with a huff and a puff, the Kia made it through the worst sections – and all the way to the top of the world! Well, our kind of world. Another "phew!" was in order.

The proceedings at the Lesotho border were as efficient as always, and with the sun heading for the horizon behind Black Mountain, we decided to delay our visit to the Touching Tiny Lives organisation in Mokhotlong. After the Sani Pass it was time for a cold one at the Sani Mountain Lodge, even as the temperature dropped to near freezing point. We were due to stay in the lodge's backpackers inn, situated near the main lodge. But our hosts informed us that



Light of our lives

Driving at night can be a risky business, and more so, driving at night in the wilds of Africa. Thankfully Opposite Lock supplied a barrage of driving lights to help us see where we were going. The package included four Lightforce 140 Lance halogen units, mounted beautifully on the custom Weca roof-rack, and with a separate switch on the dashboard, as legally required. These units are fitted with 75W bulbs and weigh just 460g each – ideal for the lightweight roof-rack.

The main party trick was the spectacular Lightforce 170 Venom HiDs, mounted on the Kia SA supplied nudge bar. These state-of-the-art high-intensity discharge (HiD) units feature all the latest and greatest in HiDs driving light technology, and have a range of more than one kilometre.

To be honest, we only switched on those 140 Lances twice – and only because we were curious to see whether they would make any impression on the Venoms on the nudge bar. They did not, and we used the Venom lights extensively. In Mozambique they proved invaluable.

Driving with the Kia's headlights on dim only, you could clearly see the road ahead of you. But with the Kia's (very good) brights and the Venoms coming off the reserve bench, night turned into day ahead of us. We could easily pick out those pedestrians walking just 5m from the road.

The lights were fitted by Opposite Lock, Pretoria North.

More information:
www.conquerorconnect.co.za;
 Tel. 012 567-1378;
 e-mail sales2@conqueror-pta.co.za;
www.oppositelock.co.za



OVERLAND ADVENTURE

SEVEN7 DRIVE

we had been “upgraded” to the main lodge’s family room, which has a fireplace! Yeahah!

That night we enjoyed dinner in the lodge’s restaurant, and it was spectacular, washed down with some home-grown Maluti beer. In our family room the fireplace was radiating warmth and the beds were super comfortable. As the temperature dropped way below zero, we were extremely thankful to be ensconced here. Camping would just not have been pleasant at all!

It was a good, good night after an eventful day. And the finishing line was in sight.

SEVEN7 LOG – DAY 7

(Sani Mountain Lodge to Pretoria, SA. 628km)

Gosh, how can a place be this cold? At 5am the Kia’s temperature gauge said it was minus two degrees, but an icy wind cut through layers of clothing. The only warm person in the entire Lesotho was GG, who had taken along his Father Christmas-like, north pole-

rated super-special jacket that turned him into a hot spot that the international space station probably registered.

As always, the Kia’s 2,4-litre engine started at the first turn of the key. We had to conquer Black Mountain, at 3200m the highest pass in Lesotho. And it sure gave the huffing and puffing Kia a workout with its steep gradients and power-sapping altitude.

The native Aborigine people in Australia have a saying, “Keep your eyes on the sun and you will not see the shadows.”

So on we went, keeping our eyes on the snow-capped peaks of Black Mountain, visible only now and then when those Light Force Venoms picked them out over a kilometre away. Eventually first gear and plenty of revs was the only way to go, but we made it up!

Arriving in the town of Mokhotlong with the sun, we headed to the Touching Tiny Lives (TTL) Foundation’s premises. There we met Nthabeleng Lephoto and British colleague

Harriet Doughty, who took us on a guided tour of the compound.

Back in 2004 a small child, orphaned by HIV/Aids, was left out in a thunderstorm to perish, its minders no longer able to feed it. Neighbours heard the child crying and took the boy to a social worker in Mokhotlong. The social worker in turn knocked on the door of former Peace Corps volunteer Ken Storen, who said, “Well, we’d better buy some diapers, then.” And so the home was established.

HIV/Aids and malnutrition are the main child killers here. The organisation helps families in this inhospitable part of the world, rehabilitating children under five who urgently need intervention to survive.

A unique case in point is little Lineo. This Aids orphan has Down’s syndrome, a rare condition in Lesotho. She was believed to be possessed by evil spirits, simply because she looked and behaved differently. As a result Lineo was severely neglected, left in a crib unattended

We covered 1800km on the first day! But driving on roads like these near Hakskeen Pan in the Northern Cape (where the Bloodhound SCC land speed record attempt will take place in 2016) made the first day’s drive a relatively easy one.

HAKSKEENPAN

and fed only on occasion by family members. Neighbours alerted TTL staff and the foundation intervened, bringing her to their halfway house.

Amazingly, in just one month, the forlorn little girl has been transformed into a bubbly ball of energy who laughs and smiles and is getting stronger by the day.

"We have found her a spot in a place that specialises in Down's syndrome children," said Harriet. "We still have to get permission from the family, but we don't think they will object. It's the only realistic shot at a half-decent life for Lineo."

A wise person once said, "He who asks is a fool for five minutes, but he who does not ask remains a fool forever." Ahem again.

We spent almost an hour at the TTL premises, and gave them toys and books. But we still had some way to go to reach the Steve Biko Hospital in Pretoria, where we had started this journey seven days earlier.

The ensuing drive through Lesotho was



Coffee and rusks were the team's staple food during the day. Driving duties were swapped every 2-3 hours, depending on the conditions.

Wrap it

Media company Graffiti was established in 1999, and since then it has grown in leaps and bounds. Today the company has offices in Midrand, Cape Town and Durban and it employs almost 200 highly-skilled personnel. Graffiti specialises in retail solutions, vehicle branding, tarpaulin services, digital print and graphic design.

At face value the business of wrapping a vehicle seems pretty straightforward. Get some vinyl wrap material in the desired colour, find someone who is technically inclined and apply said vinyl to vehicle... er, not quite.

The process of transforming a very bland white Kia Sorento 2.4 LS into a moving billboard that will attract attention and make people say, "What is that all about?" began three weeks prior to the actual wrap at the company's Midrand head office. There we spent a morning with head designer Corlia van Tonder planning a new jacket for the Sorento. After this process was completed and all the sponsor and partner logos had been added, we signed off a final proof a week later. Then the wrap had to be printed – a process not to be rushed if we wanted a proper job done.

The final wrap was applied five days before our departure, and it looked stunning.

More information: www.graffiti.co.za; Tel. 011 691-8400.



OVERLAND ADVENTURE

SEVEN7 DRIVE



The Sorento's independent suspension set-up, combined with the higher profile Bridgestone tyres, provided a very good ride on dirt roads. This dirt road leads from Pandamatenga in Botswana to Hwange in Zimbabwe. Below: To save costs the team camped where possible. But despite excellent Terra Firma tents and camping gear (check out www.trappers.co.za) we realised that camping and our tight travelling schedules just don't work - striking camp at 3am in the cold is not cool!

entertaining, to say the least. We needed to keep up a good average speed, and we pushed along merrily on the slippery sand roads, overtaking a Toyota Hilux or three along the way. Even our resident on-board Toyota praise singer was mighty impressed by the Korean SUV.

Our last crossing at the Caledonspoort border went without a hitch, and soon we were on the N1 highway, making good time for Pretoria. And then we reached Johannesburg, and slowed to a halt. Aaaaah! After driving 7000km, and with only about 50km to the finishing line, we were not going anywhere in the traffic!

It took much longer than we had hoped for, but we finally arrived at Steve Biko Hospital where a small party awaited us. It was time for the last round of handing out gifts and a friendly smile at the children's oncology ward. Watching the kids receive their gifts, and playing and smiling while they faced adversity... well, it was a suitable conclusion to our journey.

We had seen many things. Some were good and others not. We experienced a side of Mamma Africa's children we had not seen before or even imagined – one where each region's children faced their own demons, and their own challenges. One where cancer is an important fight to fight, but also one where many other issues are squared up against children.

We know this is a fight that is far from won. And we realise, too, that it may never be won. But we still want to make a difference. Even if we bring a positive change to just one child's life, that will be something. And something is always better than nothing.

The Kia Sorento – an unlikely hero

Telling a Toyota man that we were going to drive 7000km through Africa in a Kia Sorento was like telling Donald Trump that he may no longer use a hair dryer. The Toyota fan handled the news with surprising grace, preferring to keep his "I told you so!" for later, when we would no doubt be stranded, dejectedly, on the roadside. That moment never came. And after 7000km, Jan van Deventer even asked about pricing options on the new Sorento. Talk about Kia's marketing line, "The power to surprise"!

Fact is, the entry-level Sorento impressed us all. On several occasions we hit potholes so hard that we felt a wheel had broken off. But always it soldiered on.

In Swaziland, a combination of a tight schedule, the driver not paying sufficient attention and the absence of warning signs led to our hitting a big speed bump at 100km/h. Inside the car it felt as though something had exploded. But the Kia carried on regardless.

The only technical problem arose on day five in Mozambique, when a warning light lit up, indicating that there was a fault with the left front headlight. And indeed, the main left headlight had died – a combination of hours of driving at night on full brights and plenty of potholes and jolts and shocks finally taking their toll.

However, when we started up later that day after a stop, the warning light had disappeared and a check revealed that the headlight was back on! That was the sum total of mechanical "issues" on the journey.

A major plus proved to be comfort, both in the front and rear. Jan mentioned that he always suffers car sickness sitting in the back. It didn't happen in the Kia. And all-round space was excellent.

Entertainment wise, the entry-level Sorento gets Bluetooth and USB ports, so we could play our music or podcasts on the more than adequate sound system. The manual air-conditioning also worked like a charm.

If there is one area where we can offer slight criticism of the Sorento 2.4 LS it is in the power delivery segment. The DOHC, 16-valve four-cylinder engine delivers 127kW of power 6000r/min but the 225Nm of torque is available at 4000r/min, so you have to keep the engine on the go. In standard guise, the beautifully smooth six-speed manual gearbox's ratios



Three shades of tint!

PG Autoglass West Rand sponsored the tinting of the Kia's windows. We went for a very dark tint on the rear window and back quarter windows to keep prying eyes from checking out our stash of teddy bears and toys, a slightly lighter tint for the rear side windows, and an even lighter one, as the law requires, for the two side front windows. More information:

Tel. Andre 011 675-5600

Get the voice on

Internet radio station Cliffcentral.com featured updates from the SEVEN7 DRIVE team on the afternoon show. Internet radio and podcasts seem to be the way of the future, so don't get left behind. Check out www.cliffcentral.com.

Dip it...

To fit in with the rest of the Kia Sorento SEVEN7 Drive picture, we used Plastidip multi-purpose rubber coating to change the colour of the mag wheels to black. This layer not only protects the wheels but when you want to swap back to the original colour the coating simply peels off.

More information:
www.plastidipsa.co.za;
Tel. 011 763-6253.

Special thanks to:

Margaret Pretorius
SAC Diesel; SAC Trucks; Teams in Motion
Our families, who supported us through the entire process

suited the engine quite well. Driving in top gear at 120km/h was not a problem.

With the slightly bigger AT tyres fitted, the extra drag of the roof-rack and all the weight we lugged with us, the Sorento did on occasion run out of steam in sixth gear. However, all that was needed was a down shift to fifth to maintain the speed, or a shift to fourth for a quick overtake.

And it's not as though this engine minds revving at all. It spins easily and effortlessly to its redline.

When it's idling with the windows closed, the only way of making sure the engine is actually running is to check the rev counter. That's how refined it is.

Oh yes, and there was the brake system... The all-disc ABS system provided outstanding stopping power, averting several disasters as pedestrians, cyclists and buses and cars (in Mozambique especially) unexpectedly ventured into our path.

Overall fuel consumption worked out at a very reasonable 12,7/litres/100km, considering all the extra drag we added to our vehicle. A stock Sorento 2.4 LS should manage less than 10 litres/100km.

And the price? At R380 000 you will hardly find better value-for-money for a family SUV with as much space as the Sorento. And that price includes a five-year/150 000km warranty and a four-year/90 000km service plan.

We'll conclude with a quote from one of the team members: "The Sorento, even with the AT tyres and the roof-rack, was amazingly quiet and refined. Interior space was more than ample, and the boot space was something else. It is a big vehicle but the handling was excellent. The suspension offers an excellent compromise

between comfort and sure-footed handling to dodge those potholes. I want one!" – Jan van Deventer. The Toyota man.

More information: www.kia.co.za


Rising to the occasion

Deciding which organisation to support through SEVEN7 DRIVE was no easy task. We wanted to steer clear of the well-known organisations that are always in the limelight, and which already have the help of big corporations. We eventually settled on Little Fighters – a small Western Cape-based organisation that focuses its relief efforts on children with cancer. Many of their families don't have medical aid schemes, and even those that do will tell you that medical funds often give limited help.

However, Little Fighters cannot pay for treatment or hospital bills. Rather, the organisation aims to help families of victims where they can with groceries, or nappies, or whatever the family may need and organisation can supply. It also focuses on the kids themselves, providing support where it can, including some form of cheer-me-up gift.

In 2012, for instance, the organisation reached almost 800 children with cancer across the country with some form of support.

You can make a difference, too. Visit www.littlefighters.org.za to find out how.

• After learning some vital lessons on this inaugural Drive, we are already beginning to plan another Drive for 2016, with some upgrades. If you would like to stay in the loop or become involved, please visit our Facebook page "seven7drive". 

Look, a zebra crossing! A real one!
This was between Maun and Nata,
in Botswana. Wild life, including
plenty of elephants, abound in this
area - driving on this road at night
is a risky business.



Is the customer always right?

With so many compact crossovers now available in SA, it's hard to decide which one you should spend your hard-earned cash on. In searching for the answer, we asked 12 members of the general public to put them through their paces

Text: Gerhard Horn **Photography:** Gert van Rooyen and Jannie Herbst

Renault Duster 1,5 dCi 4WD
R269 900

Kia Soul 2,0 Street
R286 995

Peugeot 2008 1,6 Allure
R277 900



Compact crossovers are big business in SA. In June this year, the combined sales of the Citroën C4 Cactus, Peugeot 2008, Ford EcoSport and Renault Captur stood at 1448 units. At an average price of R265 000, the combined worth of these crossovers stood at R383 720 000. It's only natural that manufacturers want to compete in a segment with that kind of turnover in a single month.

Our problem is that this is not really a segment that we at *Leisure Wheels* fully understand yet. We are an adventure motoring magazine, which means we are used to bigger cars that usually come standard with all-wheel drive and at least one locking differential.

Not that we don't like the compact crossovers. We've driven them all and we know which one we prefer, but we wanted to ensure that we weren't missing something.

To get a better understanding of the wants and needs of a new generation of consumers, we arranged a shoot-out with a difference. Instead of driving these little off-roaders ourselves to find what we thought was the

best one, we invited a group of young people to do it for us.

The 12-member group ranged from students to young families. We chose a route comprising congested inner-city roads and some dirt driving, and each team drove every car on the same route on the same day.

We also included two "wild cards" in the form of the Kia Soul and our own long-term Renault Duster. The reason for including the Duster was obvious. It may not be as compact as some of the other vehicles but we thought it would be a nice alternative to the four main contenders in the segment.

The Soul's inclusion was nothing more than luck. When we tested the C4 Cactus for the first time, the fleet manager's assistant picked us up in a Soul. We noticed that it was more or less compact size and that it had reasonable ground clearance. Kia doesn't market it as a compact crossover, but it falls neatly into the category because of many similarities to the other cars.

So, for those of you keeping score, we had six cars, six teams, a nice route and one day to do it all in.

We devised a scoring system that included driving experience, practicality, perceived quality, value for money and even fashion appeal. Each category was worth 20 points, giving a nice round total of 100 points.

Apart from finding the winner, the real value of the exercise would be the feedback from the average, everyday motorists. We'd hoped they would be able to tell us what they looked for in driving a new car, and that we would be able to work their views into our own strict testing regime.

The first lesson we learned was shocking, to say the least. The average consumer is brutal. We thought we were tough when it came to testing cars, but nothing could prepare us for the comments we received after every outing on the test route. Some cars were verbally savaged, while others were praised beyond what we were expecting.

It was a most interesting day, and a sad one as well, as it led to the untimely demise of our long-term Duster.

But before we get to that disaster, let's take a look at the competitors in alphabetical order.

Renault Captur Turbo Dynamique
R279 900

Ford EcoSport 1.0T Titanium
R266 900

Citroën C4 Cactus
R284 900



SHOOT-OUT

COMPACT CROSSOVERS VS CONSUMERS

Citroën C4 Cactus e-THP Shine R284 900

The Cactus was arguably the most interesting car in the shoot-out. It looks futuristic thanks to the eye-gripping front and those so-called “airbumps” on the sides. Truth be told, the airbumps drew the most attention when we gave our group 15 minutes to walk around the six cars. Almost all of them wanted to know what the airbumps were and what they were for. Not all of the teams liked the look of them, but they were all left wondering why nobody had thought of the idea before.

While the interior of the Cactus is not as interesting as its exterior, it still turned out to be the most interesting of the lot. The design is neat, uncluttered and comes standard with every feature one could expect at the price,

and more.

Naturally, we had a few sceptics who would not consider buying a French car because of their perceived poor reputation of a few years ago. From our side, we tried to get past this setback by asking our testers to put any preconceived notions about any of the brands out of their minds. The French manufacturers indeed had a poor reputation a few years back, but that’s no longer the case. And when it comes to the C4 Cactus, the jury is still out. It hasn’t been around long enough for us to come to firm conclusions.

Luckily we knew the Cactus had an ace up its sleeve. The 1,2-litre three-cylinder engine

A funky interior and an even more striking exterior. The C4 Cactus also has a stunning engine and is the most fun to drive.

may be tiny, but thanks to a turbocharger, it develops a meaty 81kW and 205Nm of torque. This power is transferred to the road via a five-speed manual gearbox.

It doesn’t sound astonishing, but the Cactus only weighs a little over a ton, which gives it a decent power to weight ratio. Throw in reasonable boot space and an impressive (claimed) fuel consumption of 4,7l/100km and you have a stunning little machine. But would it be good enough to convince some of the road testers to overlook its French heritage?



Zander Potgieter, Johan Potgieter and Chalsey van der Merwe

It may seem like a bad idea to give a brand-new car to a group of students, but we were hoping they’d be able to tell us which car was the coolest. Used to walking everywhere, driving a car was a nice change in pace for them.

“The Peugeot 2008 surprised us the most. It was the most comfortable and we felt more secure thanks to Grip Control on the loose surface. The Kia Soul also looked very good on the road when it passed us.”



Freddie Muller, Febé Horn and Abri Horn

Our first family team consists of a social media expert, a scriptwriter and an 18 month old. Freddie still drives a VW Golf, but wants to trade it in on something else. Febé ferries Abri around in a Honda Jazz.

"The Citroën C4 Cactus was the best in our opinion and our favourite feature was the airbumps. The Captur, however, was also a pleasant surprise."



Ford EcoSport 1,0T Titanium R266 900

If this shoot-out were a popularity contest, the EcoSport would win it hands down. It is the best-selling compact crossover and by a significant margin, we might add. More than 900 of the 1448 compact crossover sold in June were EcoSports. It is a sales phenomenon, and it's easy to see why.

It's a Ford, which already gives potential customers peace of mind. Add some funky looks and a decent number of features at a reasonable price and you have a winning combination.

Then you have that marvellous engine.



The EcoSport is SA's best selling compact crossover and it's not hard to see why. It has a great engine and a badge that resonates with the average South African.



It's a 1,0-litre, turbocharged three-cylinder petrol unit and its traits are well-known by now. The block is small enough to fit on an A4 piece of paper, but it delivers the kind of punch we used to expect from a 1600cc engine.

Ford claims a fuel consumption figure of just 5,7l/100km, which is half of what we used to expect from a 2,0-litre engine. It's no wonder this engine has dominated its category in the International Engine of the Year awards for four consecutive years.

The EcoSport has built itself a solid reputation in the few years it has been in SA, and all our testers were aware of it. Everyone knew someone who had one, or had considered buying one in the last year or so.

We could tell they were excited to see what all the hype was about. Would the EcoSport deliver the goods, or would it be a case of a car not living up to expectations?

SHOOT-OUT

COMPACT CROSSOVERS VS CONSUMERS



The Soul is arguably the most “grown-up” vehicle of the lot. It looks cool, drives well and is very comfortable.

Kia Soul 2,0 Street **R286 995**

The Soul had the distinction of being the most expensive car in our line-up, but only by R2000.

By itself it had looked similar in size to the compact crossovers we had previously tested, but once it was delivered it became quite clear that it was not. It's a little bit bigger than the others, with the exception of the Duster.

The previous generation had a ridiculously small boot, but the new car has rectified this issue somewhat. While the Kia is bigger in every respect than its rivals, its boot is similar in size to the rest.

We couldn't help but notice that the interior quality was exceptional. The overall look and feel were much better than we'd expected, and even though the test car had mid-grade specifications, we were hard pressed to find the things Kia had left out to keep down the price.

In the engine department, Kia has taken a pragmatic approach. Instead of a three-cylinder turbocharged petrol unit, which seems the norm these days, the Soul has a 2,0-litre four-cylinder petrol engine.

Call us old-fashioned, but we liked the old-school approach to power. It has



116kW/192Nm and you really have to push it hard to get all those horses trotting. It might just be nostalgia, but we appreciated the four-cylinder growl.

Since the Soul was never marketed as a quasi off-roader, we weren't expecting much in terms of its performance on gravel. Would our testers mind this, or would it find favour in a segment where it wasn't even due to compete in the first place?



Didier Miguel and Freddie Sauerman

Both bachelors and both are undoubtedly men's men. Didier works in the steel industry and likes drifting, while Freddie is a floor manager at a studio and spends his free time pumping iron.

“The C4 Cactus was the most surprising. Engine was very lively and the quality was very good. Looking at it from the outside, you don't expect that at all. The EcoSport was also fun to drive, but the interior quality wasn't the greatest.”



Dean, Amy and Aiden Oberholzer

To ensure we received proper feedback on practicality, we invited another family along. The Oberholzers are an active family and they often travel outside the confines of the city, which means the idea of a compact crossover is highly appealing to them.

"We loved the Renault Captur's gear change in manual mode. If, however, we had to put down our own money for one of these vehicles, it would be the Soul."

Peugeot 2008 1,6 Allure R277 900

Like the Kia, Peugeot took a pragmatic approach when it decided on a powertrain for the 2008.

Its naturally aspirated 1,6-litre petrol four-cylinder is a good one, however, and it sounds even better than the 2,0-litre engine that powers the Kia. The 2008 likes to be revved hard, but to drive it like that would mean you would end up missing the whole point of the Peugeot.

We had driven it before, so we knew what the experience would be like for our road testers. The 2008 is not fast or exciting, but in terms of ride quality it's in a class of its own. It's quiet, refined and as smooth as well-made custard.

It's a mystery why Peugeot struggles to sell 20 of these cars a month. Perhaps it has something to do with the styling, which was by far the least interesting in this shoot-out. Still, we think that counts in its favour, because every segment has to have at least one car that blends into a crowd, if only for those people who don't want something flashy.

The 2008 was the only car that had a terrain response system, which Peugeot calls Grip



The Peugeot 2008 turned out to be the undisputed champion of comfort. It's Grip Control system also found favour with most of the judges.



Control. It offers settings for normal, snow, all-terrain and sand, and while it's still only a front-wheel drive car, it gives the driver the best possible chance within the limitations of front-wheel drive.

In addition, the Peugeot is generously equipped and offers a lot of usable space, mostly thanks to its station wagon-like design.



Renault Captur Turbo Dynamique R279 900

The Captur was the first of the two Renaults to compete in the shoot-out and definitely the one that fitted better in this esteemed company. The Duster was built to be rugged while the Captur, which is based on the Clio, is more of a city slicker.

Oddly, Renault opted to go for a dual-clutch automatic transmission on its top-spec turbocharged model, which is a unique feature among these cars. It does make sense when you think about their daily tasks. Most of them will never see a gravel road and are

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Renault's Captur and its dual-clutch transmission divided opinion. Some loved it, while others hated it.



more likely to be stuck in traffic. If that's the case, why not have an automatic transmission, as it makes driving that much more enjoyable in the daily grind?

The rest of the package is as enjoyable as the award-winning car it's based on. It's comfy, well-equipped and it looks good, especially in metallic orange.

The car-buying public seems to agree on this, because the Captur is the second best selling car out of the six, averaging around 420 units a month.

Renault Duster 1,5 dCi Dynamique 4WD R269 900

We just had to include this car in the shoot-out. When you look at the price, it makes sense that the average consumer would have a look at the Duster when considering a compact crossover, even though it's nothing like the other cars on this list.

Let's start with the most obvious difference between the Duster and the others:

It is a dual-purpose vehicle that can go off-road and it's as tough as they come.

The all-wheel drive system is rather rudimentary, as is the 1,5-litre turbocharged four-cylinder diesel engine, but the Duster is all the better for it. Besides, its 80kW and 240Nm fits in rather nicely in this company.

Unfortunately, the interior is basic when compared with the other cars here, but it's

not lacking as far as standard kit is concerned.

We've written about the Duster extensively, so there's not much more to say. It survived the desert sands of Namibia and our long-term vehicle recently completed a journey to Zambia and back.



Adriaan Hoogstad and Dane Beisheim

Dane is a news reporter for a large radio station and has extensive knowledge on the topic of sound. We left it up to this team to test the various infotainment systems and report back on any flaws or highlights they found.

"The Kia's entertainment centre ruled. It was also the easiest and best looking out of the lot.

Pity about the Duster, as we were looking forward to driving it the most."



Jan and Carel Herbst

These guys are very familiar with the motoring industry, thanks to their father being in charge of *Leisure Wheels* since its inception. Definitely the harshest critics of the day, but their feedback was greatly appreciated.

"The Kia and the Ford stood out the most for us. The Kia was very comfortable and more luxurious than the rest. The Cactus was very cool, but it didn't perform very well on the gravel section."

And then the worst happened

Our test route consisted of some city driving, which included a number of intersections with robots. One of these intersections was between Northumberland Avenue and Aureole Avenue.

The robots weren't working, which meant the intersection was functioning as a four-way stop.

As luck would have it, the Duster was the first car out and it just so happened that it had the family with the baby in it. It was three-quarters of the way through the intersection when a Jeep Grand Cherokee SRT smacked into its side. Luckily, nobody was injured.

We struck it lucky with the number of witnesses. The team in the Renault Captur was right behind the Duster, waiting its turn to cross. A couple in a Honda Jazz alongside the Jeep had stopped and witnessed the accident. The Jeep, it is alleged, should have waited its turn alongside the Jazz, but the lady driver merely slowed down and then entered the intersection. It's the kind of thing that happens in Johannesburg every day.

The impact was severe enough to rotate the Duster 45 degrees, but it suffered only minor damage. The shock absorber was bent and the bodywork was damaged, but it still managed to creep back to the office.

The Jeep, however, was not as fortunate. The front end was wrecked and the left front wheel



The Duster is at home on this sort of road. It's a basic vehicle, but all the better for that.



was pushed back into the body. Streams of fluid poured from the engine and it was a sad sight to witness it being pulled up onto a flat-bed.

With the Duster removed from the competition, and five vehicles fighting it out for the top position, it was anyone's game.

If there is one thing we've learned from this shoot-out, it's that the average consumer is ruthless! Consumers don't take prisoners, which makes us happy we are not the ones trying to sell them a car.

At least all of the cars managed to get an average of 65% once their combined scores had been tallied and converted to a percentage out of 100.

THE RESULTS

Renault Captur: 69,4%

The Captur's biggest upside also turned out to be its biggest flaw. The dual-clutch transmission impressed one family so much that they named it as their favourite. Other teams ranked it at the bottom, because of its automatic transmission.

Renault's decision to offer the top-spec Captur as an automatic-only option turned

out to be the most divisive topic of the day, which took us by surprise. We were expecting the C4 Cactus's styling to be the most controversial subject but it played a distant, barely discernible second fiddle to the Captur's transmission.

The Captur scored consistently well in the styling, perceived quality and practicality stakes. In these departments it scored more than 80%, but its final score was brought down by the low marks awarded for value for money.

Peugeot 2008: 74,2%

The Peugeot received its highest marks from the most unlikely of sources – the students.

We expected them to fall head over heels for either the EcoSport or Cactus, due to these vehicles' funky styling, but the three students came back and proclaimed their love for the Pug, mostly because of its comfortable driving experience and the added benefit of its Grip Control system.

As the testers returned from their stint in

SHOOT-OUT

COMPACT CROSSOVERS VS CONSUMERS

Specification sheet	Citroën C4 Cactus	Ford EcoSport EcoBoost Titanium	Kia Soul	Peugeot 2008	Renault Captur	Renault Duster
Price as tested	R284 900	R266 900	R286 995	R277 900	R279 900	R269 900
Standard features	Standard features	Standard features	Standard features	Standard features	Standard features	Standard features
Foglamps	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Height/reach adjustable steering	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes
Tuner/MP3 player	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes
USB Terminal	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Bluetooth	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Aux input	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Automatic air-con	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Satellite navigation	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Electric windows	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Adjustable exterior mirrors	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Remote central locking	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Alarm/immobiliser	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Leather upholstery	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Driver/passenger airbags	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sidebags/curtain bags	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
ABS/EBD	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes
Spare tyre	Marie biscuit	Full size	Marie biscuit	Marie biscuit	Marie biscuit	Full size
Cargo capacity	350 litres	346 litres	354 litres	350 litres	377 litres	475 litres
Engine	Engine	Engine	Engine	Engine	Engine	Engine
Type	1,2-litre turbocharged three-cylinder petrol	1,0-litre turbocharged petrol three-cylinder	2,0-litre naturally aspirated four-cylinder	1,6-litre naturally aspirated four-cylinder	1,2-litre turbocharged petrol four-cylinder	1,5-litre turbocharged four-cylinder diesel
Max power	81kW	92kW	116kW	88kW	88kW	80kW
Max torque	205Nm	170Nm	192Nm	160Nm	190Nm	240Nm
Claimed fuel consumption	4,7l/100km	5,7l/100km	N/A	5,9l/100km	5,4l/100km	5,3l/100km
Drivetrain	Drivetrain	Drivetrain	Drivetrain	Drivetrain	Drivetrain	Drivetrain
Transmission type	five-speed manual	Five-speed manual	Six-speed manual	Five-speed manual	Six-speed dual-clutch automatic transmission	Six-speed manual
Traction control	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Front wheel drive	Front wheel drive	Front wheel drive	Front wheel drive	Front wheel drive	All wheel drive with electronically lockable centre differential
Euro NCAP Safety Rating	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★
Adult occupants	82%	97%	75%	88%	88%	79%
Child occupants	79%	77%	82%	77%	79%	73%
Service & warranty	Service & warranty	Service & warranty	Service & warranty	Service & warranty	Service & warranty	Service & warranty
Service plan	5-year/ 100 000km	4-year/ 60 000km	4-year/ 90 000km	5-year/ 60 000km	3-year/ 45 000km	3-year/ 45 000km
Service intervals	20 000km	20 000km	20 000km	20 000km	15 000km	15 000km
Warranty	3-year / 100 000km	4-year / 120 000km	5-year / 150 000km	5-year / 150 000km	5-year / 150 000km	3-year / 150 000km
These vehicles compete in the same segment, but every one of them has a stand-out feature that makes it unique in its own right. When you test drive one of these cars, remember to give these features a go.	The bubble wrapping on the side is called an airbump and it can withstand a direct hit from another car door or a shopping trolley. Also check out the fancy digital instrument cluster and snazzy infotainment system.	Make sure you try out Ford's Sync infotainment system. You mate your phone via Bluetooth and control the sound system and basically everything else via voice control. Ford says it understands a Saffer accent; so don't be afraid to <i>gooi</i> some English with an Afrikaans accent.	The Soul isn't marketed as a compact crossover, but it costs around the same and offers the same amount of space and practicality. We'll let you decide if it's a worthy competitor.	First of all, you don't have to have the car with all those pink inserts. Secondly, even though it's front wheel drive, Peugeot offers this car with a terrain select system to make off-roading easier. The dial for the various settings can be found between the two front seats.	Be sure to check out the touch-screen infotainment system, which includes TomTom navigation with traffic alert as standard. The Captur is also the only car to offer a dual-clutch automatic transmission as standard.	The Duster is the only "real" 4x4 here. It's based on the previous generation Nissan X-Trail. Also the only diesel model in the shoot-out.

the 2008, we kept on recording the same feedback. "It's the most comfortable car here". This was reflected in the final scores, in which Peugeot recorded high marks across the board for driving experience.

It also received good marks for perceived quality and practicality, but only average marks in the value for money stakes. And it also lost a lot of points in the style department.

Ford EcoSport: 77,8%

The feedback on the EcoSport was consistent throughout the day. As it turned out, the testers saw it as neither bad nor good. It was decidedly average.

The score sheet pretty much reflected the feedback we received as the EcoSport received good rather than stunning marks. But the fact that it scored those marks consistently counted in its favour.

The EcoSport fared very well in two departments – driving experience and value for money.

As the cheapest car in the line-up, the

value for money marks made sense and that magnificent EcoBoost engine certainly did its part in clawing back some points in the driving section.

Overall, it was a solid performance from the segment sales leader.

Kia Soul: 86,6%

The Soul surprised a lot of people, including us. From the moment we climbed inside and experienced the quality, we knew this car was going to do well in the shoot-out, especially since the testers were going to drive the cars back-to-back.

Getting out of any of the other vehicles and into the Soul is like stepping into the interior of a vehicle competing in a higher segment.

The testers also liked the driving experience and styling, which meant the car scored well in every category.

In terms of value for money, the group didn't retract any marks, even though the Kia was the most expensive of them all. The consensus was that the Soul felt worth the extra cash, so

the testers were more than willing to give it a decent rating in that department.

The only negative feedback had to do with the clutch, which a few people felt was awkward for city driving.

Citroën C4 Cactus: 87,8%

Yep, the Cactus, with its newfangled airbumps, emerged victorious from this battle, but only just.

It received top marks in every category and the testers had nothing but praise for this car.

Some of them felt it performed rather poorly on gravel, but they just didn't mind as they very rarely, if ever, drive on anything but tar.

The mothers in the group liked the spacious boot, while the fathers appreciated the turbocharged engine and low weight combination. The word "dynamic" was even used once or twice.

With the Cactus, Citroën has built an eye-grabbing car with numerous interesting features. More importantly, it ensured that the Cactus was fun to drive, frugal and safe.

The Leisure Wheels verdict



Gerhard Horn:

It's such a pity the Duster was involved in the accident on the very first loop because, I feel, it would have

finished near the top, if not in first place.

In addition to the scoring, we asked the road testers to give us a breakdown of all the attributes that play a role when they buy a new car. We gave them eight options to choose from, and the top three ended up being price, practicality and standard features. The Duster is top notch in all three departments, so I believe it would have done very well.

On the other hand, most of the testers said they rarely drove off the beaten path, which makes the Duster's all-wheel drive an unnecessary addition to the package. (If you are one of those people, keep in mind the front-wheel drive Duster Dynamique 1,6-litre petrol, which retails at the bargain price of R230 000. That is exceptional value for money.)

I often need a car with all-wheel drive, so the Duster fits my needs perfectly. Having spent the last eight months in the company of this particular vehicle, I can tell you that it's comfortable, frugal and spacious enough to suit the needs of a family. Out of all the cars in the shoot-out, the Duster was the only one with a boot large enough to swallow a pram, collapsible cot and enough clothing for three people on a weekend away from home.

I know of at least four couples who have purchased the Duster on my recommendation, and to date they have all been happy with their vehicles.

I've thought about offering to buy the *Leisure Wheels* Duster ever since it was delivered to our offices in January, and there are just two things that stood in my way. I already had the use of this long-term and, more importantly, I'm hoping that Renault brings the Duster double-cab, also known as the Oroch, to SA before long.

If I weren't in a position where I had to go off the beaten track regularly, I'd probably go for the

Kia Soul. The interior quality is sublime and in many ways it feels more grown up than any other vehicle here.

The C4 Cactus gets third place, but only because the Soul is more comfortable on the day-to-day grind. The Cactus is the most fun to drive thanks to its hot-hatch derived suspension, but I suspect it would wear thin after a few weeks. Still, it deserves to sell a lot more than the 30-odd units Citroën currently sells per month.



GG van Rooyen:

I'm very happy with the results of our shoot-out. I would perhaps have given the Kia Soul the top spot and moved

the Cactus to second place, but there is no doubt that the Cactus is an excellent vehicle and deserving winner.

The Cactus is the perfect vehicle for this segment and will appeal to its target market. It is fun to drive, funky, has loads of personality and is pretty practical. That small turbo mill is

a real gem, too – eager and gutsy while still being frugal.

The Kia Soul is quite a different proposition. Like the Cactus, it boasts some quirky, love-it-or-hate-it styling, but this idiosyncratic exterior hides a more sober and "grown up" offering.

The cabin of the Soul isn't as funky and fun as that of the Cactus, but it is more plush and refined. Its two-litre powerplant is also not as modern and impressive as the Cactus's three-cylinder engine, but it nevertheless does a great job.

So, overall, I'm happy with the outcome of our test. It's just a shame that the Renault Duster was forced to bow out so quickly. Had it had a fair shot, I think this underdog could have turned into a surprise winner.

The Duster doesn't have the funky looks or impressive interior of the Cactus or Soul, but it does have an AWD system, loads of packing space and a truly attractive sticker price. In a segment that is quickly becoming very crowded, the Duster stands out thanks to some unique selling points. **LW**

ROAD TEST



IS THE PREFERRED FUEL
USED BY LEISURE WHEELS

MAZDA CX-5 2.5 INDIVIDUAL FWD AUTO

Flying under the radar

Originally launched in 2012, the Mazda CX-5 received an update this year. Changes are mostly subtle, but they have nevertheless added to the overall appeal of the vehicle, making it one of the best choices in its segment





The interior of the CX-5 is plush and refined and compares well with the cabins of premium compact SUVs. Of course, this also means that the Mazda is a bit more expensive than some of its direct competitors.

The Mazda CX-5 isn't the flashiest crossover on our roads. In fact, its greatest shortcoming is arguably that its design is a bit dull. Despite the infusion of Mazda's "Kodo – Soul of Motion" design language into its styling, it lacks pizzazz.

But you'd do well to look beyond this lack of flair because, hiding behind its slightly nondescript sheet metal is one of the best compact crossovers on the market.

Other crossovers might try to tempt you with bold designs and shiny baubles, but the CX-5 doesn't need to, since it boasts the attributes that truly matter: it is comfortable, practical, fun to drive and offers solid performance.

★★★★ Features and equipment

The design of the Mazda CX-5 might not be terribly exciting, but it has aged well. Three years after its launch, the vehicle still looks fresh.

In fact, thanks to a revised grille, it now looks better than ever. The previous front end has been replaced by a new five-bar shield-shaped grille that has updated the look of the CX-5 nicely.

The Individual model (which we tested) and the top-spec Akera AWD diesel also have a new set of LED headlamps and gunmetal 19-inch alloy wheels.

The biggest changes, however, are in the cabin. The CX-5 now boasts Mazda's 7-inch MZD infotainment system. It has been added across the range, and the Individual and Akera models also get a Bose audio system with nine speakers and a satellite navigation system (optional on other models).

Overall, the MZD system works really well. It is intuitive and easy to navigate, making use of a central dial similar to those found in BMW and Mercedes-Benz vehicles.

It is also worth noting that the CX-5 offers a very comprehensive suite of safety features, including multiple airbags, ABS brakes, dynamic stability control, hill launch assist, a tyre pressure monitoring system and a reverse camera.

★★★★ Accommodation

The cabin is very impressive. In fact, it could hold its own with some premium competition. The level of quality is practically on par with that offered by the Teutonic brands.

The CX-5 has an eight-way adjustable driver's seat with power lumbar support, leather seats, dual-zone aircon, Bluetooth connectivity, cruise control, power sunroof, keyless entry, steering-wheel controls and rain-sensing wipers.

But it isn't just the long list of standard

STANDARD FEATURES	
Foglamps	Yes
Height/reach adj steering	Yes/Yes
Tuner/MP3 player	Yes/Yes
USB terminal	Yes
Bluetooth	Yes
Aux input	Yes
Automatic air-con	Yes
Satellite navigation	Yes
Electric windows	Yes
Adj exterior mirrors	Yes
Remote central locking	Yes
Alarm/immobiliser	Yes
Leather upholstery	Yes
Driver/passenger airbags	Yes
Sidebags/curtain bags	Yes

features that impresses. The quality of the materials in general is top-notch. Everything you touch feels durable and well made.

The SUV provides a good amount of usable space. There is 403 litres of luggage space, which swells to 1620 litres when the second row of seating is folded down. Rear seats are split 40:20:40, and can be folded down depending on space needed.

The CX-5 might not look very big but for a compact SUV, the CX-5's interior is surprisingly roomy. When it comes to space

ROAD TEST

MAZDA CX-5 2.5 INDIVIDUAL FWD AUTO



The Mazda CX-5 performs adequately on gravel roads. Unfortunately, its 19-inch rims are shod with low-profile rubber, which is great for tar but leaves a bit to be desired on gravel.

and practicality, the Mazda is one of the best options in its segment.

★★★★ Performance

A 2,5-litre petrol mill that produces 141kW of power and 256Nm of torque drives the CX-5 Individual model that we tested. Thanks to Mazda's Skyactiv technologies, the company claims that, despite the engine's relatively large capacity, the SUV requires a mere 7,4 litres of fuel per 100km.

What exactly are these Skyactiv technologies? Well, there is a precise direct-injection multi-hole system that minimises fuel use, as well as a unique piston design that helps to achieve more efficient combustion of the fuel and air mix, boosting

power and lowering emissions. A major reduction of internal friction liberates extra free-revving power, while a free-breathing 4-2-1 exhaust layout enhances efficiency.

The engine is mated to a six-speed automatic transmission. The vehicle is 2WD only. If you want an AWD model, you have to go for the 2.2 diesel Akera.

Performance on the 2,5-litre model is hard to fault. With 141kW on tap, the CX-5 is predictably brisk. Moreover, the powerplant works well with the automatic transmission. There is very little throttle lag, and the gearbox swaps cogs efficiently and predictably. There's even a Sport mode that forces the 'box to hang onto gears a tad longer, squeezing even more performance



Visually, the CX-5 isn't the most interesting compact SUV on the road, but it still has a modern look, despite being three years old. A new grille has also improved the overall appearance of the vehicle.

MAZDA CX-5 2.5 INDIVIDUAL FWD AUTO

ENGINE

Type	2,5-litre, four-cylinder, inline
Displacement	2488cc
Max power	138 kW @ 5700 r/min
Max torque	250 Nm @ 3250 r/min

CHASSIS AND BODY

Layout	Front engine, two-wheel drive
Frame	Monocoque chassis
Brakes front	Disc brakes
Brakes rear	Disc brakes
ABS/EBD	Yes/Yes
Wheels	19-inch
Tyres	275/50 R22
Spare tyre	255/55 R19
Steering	Power assisted
Turning radius	5,5m

SUSPENSION

Front	Independent set-up with MacPherson struts
Rear	Fully independent multi-link set-up

DRIVETRAIN

Transmission type	Six-speed automatic
Traction/stability control	Yes/Yes
Limited slip diff	No
Differential lock	No
Full-time 4WD	No

DIMENSIONS

Kerb weight	1556kg
Length	4540mm
Width	1840mm
Height	1710mm
Wheelbase	2700mm
Track front	1585mm
Track rear	1590mm
Cargo (seats down)	1620 litres
Ground clearanc	215mm
Towing capacity	1000kg

CLAIMED PERFORMANCE

Top speed	Not given
Overall fuel consumption	7,4 litres/100km
Fuel tank size	56 litres
Estimated tank range	757km

NEED TO KNOW

An impressive luxury SUV that is eye-catching and very well equipped.

We love The quality and features

But we don't like The lack of a door button in the cabin

We say A great SUV that can take on premium compact SUVs

Price as tested R408 700

Service plan Three year

Service intervals 15 000km

Warranty Three-year/unlimited km

from the engine.

You would probably find it hard to average the claimed the 7,4 litres of fuel per 100km, but consumption will still be pleasantly low for a 2,5-litre petrol mill that produces 141kW.

★★★ Ride/handling

With a powerful 2,5-litre engine and a smooth automatic gearbox, it would have been a shame if the CX-5 offered a disappointing ride. Thankfully, though, the vehicle provides a fun and involving ride for a compact SUV.

The suspension (an independent set-up with MacPherson struts at the front and a fully independent multi-link set-up at the back) provides a taut and sporty ride without ever feeling too firm or uncomfortable on tar.

Unsurprisingly, the ride quality deteriorates quickly when you venture onto gravel. The sporty suspension, combined with the 19-inch rims and low-profile tyres, results in a rather bumpy ride. That said, the experience never becomes achingly uncomfortable, and considering that the vehicle is 2WD only, most owners will seldom encounter a gravel road.

Noise, vibration and harshness (NVH) levels are very low, even on ugly gravel. In fact, from




the cabin, you won't even hear that petrol engine purring.

★★★ Verdict

At R408 700, the 2.5 Individual CX-5 seems pricey – especially if you consider that it is 2WD only – but the overall quality shouldn't be underrated. The CX-5 truly is a premium-level SUV that offers great comfort,

practicality and performance. Also, though not a great looker, the vehicle is fun and involving to drive.

The CX-5 has been selling in respectable numbers over the last few years, and once you've spent some time with it you will understand why. It might not call a whole lot of attention to itself, but it is a fantastic vehicle to live with.

RIVALS	Ford Kuga 1.5T Trend Auto	Hyundai ix35 2.0 Elite	Kia Sportage 2.0 Auto
Price	R371 900	R399 900	R381 995
Performance	132 kW/240 Nm	116 kW/192 Nm	116 kW/192 Nm
			

Driving impression By Gerhard Horn

I didn't like the CX-5 when I first drove it years ago. The 2,0-litre petrol engine was a bit pap and that dragged the whole car down with it.

But Mazda's divorce from Ford has done wonders for this particular SUV as the range is now available with a 2,5-litre petrol engine and a magnificent 2,2-litre turbocharged diesel. I drove these new models at Mazda's reintroduction to SA a few months back and concluded that the car finally made sense. It

used to be one of those SUVs that you forgot about while standing in line to have a look at the new Ford Kuga, or the Toyota Rav4.

I'm rather fond of the CX-5's styling, and I quite like the 2,5-litre petrol and automatic gearbox combination, but it's the aura of quality that really stands out.

The door makes a satisfying "thunk" when you close it and the black interior just oozes sophistication. The steering wheel is particularly nice. How

can you not like the feel of quality leather? Even those fake carbon fibre inserts look stunning.

Having said that, there are two niggles that would drive me crazy if I owned this car. The doors don't automatically unlock when you remove the key and the stop/start system wouldn't disengage a few times.

The driving experience was enjoyable. We have a spot near the office that we frequently use for testing, and the CX-5 fared very well on a surface that

upsets the suspension in most cars and drowns the cabin in road noise. In the CX-5, we were well insulated and it soaked up the worst of the uneven surface.

The price is a bit steep, and I would recommend going for the diesel over the petrol. With a petrol powertrain, the CX-5 is just as good as its main rivals, but that silky smooth 129kW/420Nm diesel and automatic gearbox combination is spot on in this segment. That's the one I recommend. **LW**

NEW MODELS

MERCEDES BENZ GLC

Mercedes Benz is happy to acknowledge that it made a big mistake in not offering the GLK to South African motoring enthusiasts. For technical reasons too complicated to explain here, the GLK was made available only to left-hand drive markets, and it turned out to be the company's best selling SUV in many European countries.

We recently attended the launch of the new version of the GLK, now called the GLC. Excursions kicked off in Basel, Switzerland, and we were fortunate enough to spend a free day in this beautiful city before the actual launch day.

While on a walkabout in the city, I noticed several examples of the old GLK, and I couldn't

help but wonder how many of them would have been sold in SA, had it been available. It's the sort of car just made for sunny SA. It was an aggressively styled machine, with a decent line-up of petrol and diesel engines, and it wore its coveted three-pointed star really well.

Anyway, we are definitely getting the new model, but now Mercedes will have to work really hard to tempt people out of their BMW X3s and Audi Q5s. These two SUVs have dominated a segment where Mercedes just wasn't present. And both are brilliant products, so the GLC will have its work cut out to make an impact.

I saw pictures of the GLC before leaving for Switzerland and I was surprised at how

sedate it looked. The designer was obviously bound by the characteristics of the C-class it is based on, but to my mind they could have done something a little more special.

My view didn't change when I saw the GLC "in the metal", but I warmed to it over the next two days.

This car is not flashy at all, but there are certain muscular design elements that you only notice once you sit back and study it. (Having the lead designer at your breakfast table also helps!)

But enough about the styling, because there's a lot more to the GLC than the way it looks.

The first thing you notice within 10km of setting off is the ride quality and refinement.

Upsetting the apple cart

Mercedes Benz missed out on a lot of action by not introducing the GLK to the SA market. Now the GLC has been launched internationally, and it promises to make up the lost ground

Text: Gerhard Horn



I know the BMW X3 fairly well and I can say, without a shadow of doubt, that the Benz is better for everyday driving. Mercedes has raised the bar in this respect. The GLC cruises beautifully and effortlessly.

The suspension is tuned for comfort and there's minimal noise intrusion in the beautifully designed cabin. Couple that with the latest in petrol and diesel engines and an all-new nine-speed automatic transmission, and you have a winning soft-roader SUV.

Both on the highways and inner-city roads, the GLC decimates its competitors.

Once my co-driver and I turned off the highway, we found ourselves on some of the most magnificent driving roads I've ever had the pleasure to experience. Unfortunately, however, they are better suited to small hot hatches than SUVs, but as we were in the turbocharged petrol 250, I couldn't help but press down a little harder on the accelerator.

As with most cars these days, the GLC allows you to choose between a number of settings. I swapped from "comfort" to "sport", and the car responded immediately. The steering became heavier, the throttle responses were more immediate and the suspension stiffened up nicely.

I carried as much speed as I dared into the tight corners and the car stuck to the tar really well. It's not a sports car by any means, but for what it is, it's not half bad.

Pretty soon we arrived at the off-road part of the event and I was disappointed to see that the track was only 1,2km long. I assumed it would be a quick drive through the beautiful gravel roads along the vineyards in Alsace, but it soon became apparent that the organisers had a massive surprise in store for us.

I chose a GLC fitted with standard road-biased rubber, as can be seen in the photographs. I had hoped that this would give me a clearer view of what the average driver could expect, and what I experienced left me at a loss for words.

I was puzzled as to why I needed an instructor in the car with me for the off-road section, but then the vineyards opened up and revealed a very steep 30m climb up a loose surface. My first thought was that this couldn't possibly be part of our route, and when the instructor pointed in that direction, I said: "You can't be serious!" There was no way we would get the GLC up a slope I wouldn't even walk up.

Then my companion revealed a new button behind the main touch pad, between the front seats. The car had been fitted with the Off-Road Engineering package which, when coupled with

Mercedes GLC South Africans missed out on the first-generation GLC, but the new model more than makes up for this small oversight. The rear of the vehicle is muscular and it actually has decent off-road ability, as can be seen by the strip of images at the bottom of this page. Below right: The interior is luxurious, comfortable and has that quality feel we've come to expect from Mercedes Benz.



Mercedes' Air Body Control, turns the GLC into a soft-roader slayer.

The ride height can be raised for additional ground clearance, but that in itself isn't enough to conquer tough terrain. In addition to increased ground clearance, you surely need low-range, chunky tyres and a locking differential, or two?

The GLC had none of that, but I'd never experienced anything quite like its Off-Road Engineering package. It helped the car clamber over that hill with minimal effort. It even inspired me to try my best to catch it out, but I couldn't. I even stopped in the middle of an incline with an axle-twister thrown in for good measure, but the car kept on clambering up. Slowly, but surely.

If we didn't have the pictures to back up these claims, I doubt anybody would believe them. The GLC certainly represents a new benchmark in soft-roader off-roading ability, and it does so by using smart electronics.

Some of my colleagues commented that the package takes the fun out of off-roading as you merely have to press a button and point the car where you want it to go, and to some extent they're right, but I know that the average buyer is going to love a system like this. Some people like to work hard to get where they're going, but there's something to be said for a car that makes it as easy as possible.

On the way back to the hotel, I "rode shotgun", and this gave me the chance to explore the interior and the materials used to make it. It's all top notch, and current Mercedes drivers will be familiar with the layout.

The standard specifications for SA-bound vehicles isn't available yet, but the overall feel of the interior is brilliant. It looks and feels as well put together as anything else in Mercedes' line-up. It's the same interior you'll find on the new C-class, which recently won the World Car of the Year title.



LOCAL PRICING

Mercedes-Benz GLC 220 d	R599 900
Mercedes-Benz GLC 250 d	R619 900
Mercedes-Benz GLC 250	R604 900
Mercedes-Benz GLC 300	R654 900

SA will be getting the 250 petrol, 250 diesel and 220 diesel models. I drove all three, and they are all very good in their own way.

The power hungry driver will be interested to know that an AMG version was all but confirmed during a brief discussion with Dieter Zetsche, chairman of the Daimler AG board and head of Mercedes-Benz cars.

The new nine-speed automatic gearbox, which is standard across the range, is, however, the real star of the show. You barely notice it in Comfort mode and yet it's willing and able to let you have fun when you dial it to "Sport". More than anything else, it helps all three engines achieve impressive fuel consumption figures.

The GLC is really going to upset the apple cart when it arrives in SA later this year. It's everything a luxury SUV should be, and a lot more. Breaking into that particular segment isn't going to be easy, but the GLC is more than good enough to punch its way in. **LW**



Insight into the future of Mercedes

The head of Mercedes-Benz cars, Dr Dieter Zetsche, recently sat down with South African motoring scribes and answered questions about a very special bakkie

Text: Gerhard Horn



During the recent Mercedes-Benz GLC international launch, the SA media were fortunate enough to have a round table discussion with Dr Dieter Zetsche, chairman of the Daimler AG board and head of Mercedes-Benz cars. The buck stops with him, and the chance to talk to him was a rare opportunity.

Time was limited, and questions had to be sent to him in advance. Luckily, the journalists had only one major new model they wanted to talk about, and it wasn't the GLC they had driven a little earlier.

Mercedes-Benz had recently stunned the automotive world by announcing that it was going to enter the bakkie market. It didn't help that the announcement was made around the beginning of April, leading many people in the motoring community to believe it was an April Fool's Day joke.

But the more one thought about it, the more sense it made. SA isn't the only country where the bakkie is all things to all men. The primary target markets for the Mercedes bakkie are Europe, Australia, SA and Latin America. It will be aimed at both the private user and commercial customers.

"Mercedes-Benz is the fastest growing premium brand in the world," said Zetsche. "Entering the rapidly growing segment of mid-sized pick-ups is an important step in continuing our global growth path."

The Mercedes bakkie, rumoured to carry the moniker GLT, will be SA's first premium bakkie from a German luxury vehicle manufacturer.

One could make a case that Volkswagen did it first with the Amarok, but listening to the top Mercedes man, it became clear that the company is intent on building a bakkie that is a cut above the rest.

The cost of such an undertaking is not insignificant, even for a global giant like Mercedes-Benz. To minimise development costs, it has extended its partnership with Nissan to develop the new product.

The bakkie will share some of its architecture with the all-new Nissan Navara, but it will be designed and engineered to be worthy of that most desirable of badges, the three-pointed star.

"Thanks to our well-established partnership with the Renault-Nissan Alliance, we are able to drastically reduce the time and cost it will take to enter this key segment," said Zetsche.

No release date has been set yet, but thanks to the partnership with Nissan, we might see this new bakkie on SA roads by the end of the decade.

The partnership is also the reason some people may be cynical about a Mercedes bakkie. Why fork out a lot of money for a Mercedes when you can have the upcoming Navara at a better price?

Zetsche says it will be a "true Mercedes". That means Mercedes levels of comfort, safety and design, combined with the high level of utility afforded by a bakkie like the Navara.

As for the engine line-up, the chairman revealed that it would use both Nissan and Mercedes powertrains. We weren't able to get more than that out of him, but we expect there will be a clear distinction between the engines used in the leisure market models and the workhorse bakkies. The leisure market will probably have Mercedes' current and upcoming four- and six-cylinder petrol and diesel engines while the workhorses use of Nissan engines that have already proved their worth in hauling cargo.

Naturally, a man of Zetsche's prominence couldn't escape an audience with a group of SA journalists without a question about our political woes and annual labour issues.

"I am not a politician and Mercedes-Benz is a guest in SA," was the answer we got, but he did say the company was keeping a close eye on developments in SA.

He also mentioned the positive impact the popularity of the new C-class was having in the country. The exceptional demand for the vehicle is obviously good news for every plant that produces it, and SA just happens to have one of those plants in East London.

With that topic closed, Zetsche moved on to the advancements Mercedes has made in the field of "autonomous" vehicles.

"In the last two years, the concept has



Above: The first image of Mercedes' bakkie was released in April.

Right: Dieter Zetsche and Carlos Ghosn at the announcement of the Mercedes-Benz and Nissan partnership, which has since been extended to include the development of a new luxury double cab.





Above: The interior of the all-new GLC includes a number of advanced, autonomous driving features. Although the car itself cannot “take over” completely, the technology for it to do so already exists, as can be seen from the graphic below.

grown significantly,” he said. “but there are still a few things we have to iron out.”

The difficulty is not with the hardware, which has been performing admirably for years now. In fact, the GLC we drove is one of the first cars that was fitted with an early version of the system our children will be familiar with in years to come. The GLC latches on to the car in front of it and will accelerate, brake and steer all by itself on the highway – an eerie experience, to be sure.

However, the system does not allow you to remove your hands from the steering wheel, so the driver is still responsible for whatever the car is doing at any point in time.

Zetsche then outlined a scenario that showed the magnitude of the algorithms Mercedes’ engineers will have to write in the coming years.

“Imagine an autonomous vehicle driving along, and a car swerves in front of it. It could swerve to the right and hit a child, or swerve to the left and hit an elderly person.” That’s a very difficult moral dilemma which, at some point, will be handed over to a cold, calculating computer to decipher. Meanwhile, it’s the engineers’ job to ensure that the autonomous car makes the right decision – not to mention the issue of legal repercussions that could follow.

The final few minutes of the interview were



devoted to the reason for our presence there in the first place – the new GLC.

Zetsche admitted it was a shame that the GLK (the previous generation SUV based on the C-class, now known as the GLC) was never sold in SA. But Mercedes had designed the all-new C-class knowing that it would eventually spawn an SUV. Whether they would offer it in right-hand drive was never up for discussion. It was just accepted as fact.

Mercedes-Benz is serious about its SA customers. That much is evident from Zetsche’s interesting insight into the future of Mercedes.

Fans of the brand can rest easy in the knowledge that the company will be sending some serious machines our way over the next few years, and it’s going to be an epic battle between Mercedes’ first bakkie and the ones we know and love. **LW**

NEW MODEL
MERCEDES-BENZ GLE

Post-Jurassic Merc

The latest update of the M-Class, now called the GLE, was recently launched in Austria. The ML, always capable on road, was never really rated as a serious off-roader. Has its successor made the transition?

Text: Ferdi de Vos



The GLE will now be available as a coupé, which will go head-to-head with the BMW X6.



Prior to its world debut nearly 18 years ago, the original Mercedes-Benz M-Class made an appearance in the movie, *The Lost World: Jurassic Park*, presumably to emphasise its supposed off-road capabilities.

The successful 1997 sequel of *Jurassic Park* featured the first rendition of Stuttgart's ground-breaking US-built SUV as an off-road "technical" model, complete with camouflage paint job, designed and modified to protect its occupants against rogue dinosaurs.

Now its latest successor, sporting new nomenclature, mimics the W163 M-Class's brave Jurassic antics in the long-awaited sequel, *Jurassic World*, released internationally in June.

The leading four-wheeled star, which shares its underpinnings with the recently revamped ML successor, is the new slant-roofed version of Stuttgart's latest luxury SUV, the GLE Coupé.

Aimed squarely at the BMW X6, the new Merc Coupé – handmade specially for filming nearly 18 months before its market launch – struts its stuff in the film in GLE 450 AMG Sport guise.

During their adventures in the Jurassic jungles – filmed in remote locations on the Hawaiian islands and near New Orleans – the Chris Pratt and Bryce Dallas Howard characters put their trust in the off-road capabilities of Mercedes-Benz's latest "X-fighter".

Yet, while the vehicles may make it look easy on celluloid, it is debatable whether it was really such a walk in the "park" ...

Real world capabilities

Why? Well, despite its movie antics and four-wheel drive credentials, the earliest ML

– as it was badged after BMW moaned about the M-designation – in the real world was never really considered a candidate for serious off-roading.

It was reasonably competent, though, and it introduced new technology such as electronic stability control (ESC), front and side impact airbags and Merc's Four-wheel Electronic Traction System (4-ETS) to the 4x4 realm.

The innovative 4-ETS system, simulating a diff-lock's function by aggressively braking one or more spinning wheels, worked quite well in rocky terrain, but was quite tricky to manage in mud and sand.

Interference by the quite rudimentary ESC and ABS systems added to this, and some build quality issues with earlier Alabama-built ML models also did not endear them to their owners.

Improvements to the Tuscaloosa plant and better systems software addressed these shortcomings in the second generation M-Class,



The GLE's On&Off Road package has been upgraded to include an optional Off-Road Engineering package. This offers a special Offroad+ mode that the driver can access at the turn of a knob.

now using a unibody platform rather than a body-on-frame, and available only as a five-seater.

It also came with what Mercedes called an Off-Road Pro package, with centre and rear diff-locks, 4-ETS, a two-speed transfer case with reduction gearing and optional adjustable ground clearance, increasing it to 600mm.

Further improvements followed with the third generation model, released in 2011, with an On&Off Road Package made available from 2013.

This package added a two-speed dual range Magna Powertrain transfer case with centre diff-lock, reduction gearing, underbody skid plates and a programmed terrain selection system. The rear diff-lock was also discontinued.

The new range

This brings us to the face-lifted third generation W166 model range, now renamed in line with the brand's recently amended nomenclature.

The "G" stands for gelände-wagen (German for overland or off-road vehicle), alluding to the long-running G-Wagen, followed by the letters "L" for "long" and "E" – implying that it is the SUV equivalent of the E-Class.

Launched in Austria, where from 1999 to 2002 the original M-Class was built by Magna Steyr in Graz for the Euro market, the

thoroughly revised GLE range now includes an entry level 250d model with 2.2-litre four-cylinder diesel engine (150kW/480Nm) and a version with the 4-Matic four-wheel drive system.

Also available is a V6 diesel 350d 4-Matic model (190kW and 620Nm), the petrol driven GLE 400 4-Matic V6 (245kW/480Nm) and GLE 500 4-Matic V8 (320kW/700Nm) models.

A hybrid 500e 4-Matic with 3-litre V6 petrol engine (245kW/480Nm) and 85kW electric motor have been added, while the Mercedes-AMG versions include the 63 4-Matic (410kW/700Nm) and 63 S 4-Matic (430kW/760Nm).

The three pointed star's GLE Coupé line-up includes a diesel (GLE 350d) and three petrol driven derivatives – including the GLE 450 AMG, a new "junior" AMG version with 270kW on tap.

The other two petrol models are the GLE 400 and the Mercedes-AMG GLE 63 S – the "real" AMG with a twin turbo petrol-V8 delivering 430kW.



About 18 years after the ML made its debut in *The Lost World: Jurassic Park*, the all-new GLE Coupé features in the new film in the series, *Jurassic World*.



NEW MODEL MERCEDES-BENZ GLE

The biggest mechanical change is the new 9G-Tronic automatic transmission mated to all the engine derivatives, with the exception of the Mercedes-AMG models.

They still use the tried and tested 7G-Tronic Plus auto 'box, as it can reliably handle the massive torque produced by the AMG power plants.

Driving modes

All the models are equipped with Dynamic Select with up to five driving modes – Individual, Comfort, Slippery and Sport – as well as an optional Sport+ mode for the GLE 400 4-Matic.

The system works in conjunction with the Airmatic suspension. The preferred pre-programmed set-up is selected by using a rotary knob in the centre console.

Sport mode lowers the ride height by 15mm, while Individual allows you to choose your own steering (Comfort or Sport) and suspension setting preference.

The Sport+ mode on the GLE 400 4-Matic and AMG derivatives lowers the suspension by another 10mm for super sportiness.

Dynamic Select works superbly on-road, but what about away from the tarmac? Well, in the GLE the On&Off Road package has now been supplemented by an optional Off-Road Engineering package with special "Offroad+" drive mode that – at the turn of a knob – does everything for you in difficult terrain.

Depending on the program, various characteristics of the system, such as the 4-ETS, transfer gear selection, acceleration skid control, steering, ground clearance, air suspension and damping can be automatically adjusted.

The selected drive mode and terrain information, such as incline and angle of ascent, is displayed in the instrument cluster, and your most recently selected setting is stored for up to four hours after you switch off the ignition.

On a dedicated 4x4-route close to Saalfelden, the 350d 4-Matic (with non-standard AT rubber) impressed with its ability in the rocky, mountainous terrain. It negotiated the obstacles with confidence, unceremoniously dealing with axle-twisters, steep inclines and 70% descents.

The 9G-Tronic transmission integrated seamlessly with the drive mode settings, and the refinement of the system made it a pleasant experience.

Sure, there was some occasional wheel-spin over loose rocks and one needed to be careful at some of the break-over points, but on the whole it was an imposing performance.



More packages...

Besides the new drivetrain combinations and cosmetic updates, the interior of the GLE has been extensively upgraded in terms of quality of materials, fit and finish, and the array of Intelligence Drive assistance packages available.

The list is extensive, and includes systems such as Distronic Plus with Steering Assist, BAS Plus with Cross-Traffic Assist, Active Blind

Spot Assist, Active Lane Keeping Assist and Pre-Safe Plus.

A Parking package with 360 degree camera, Active Parking Assist and Parktronic is also available, while the LED Intelligent Light System improves night-time visibility. Best of all, a dedicated off-road lighting system can also be ordered as an option.

The new GLE range, including the Coupé models, will be here in October, and virtually all derivatives available overseas are earmarked for SA, the exceptions being the 220d 4-Matic, the Mercedes-AMG GLE 63 4-Matic Coupé and the GLE 500e hybrid.

Prices will vary from R1 005 674 for the GLE 350d to a whopping R1 876 111 for the AMG GLE 63 S 4-Matic Coupé.

PRICES

Mercedes-Benz GLE*

GLE 250d	R866 694
GLE 350d 4-Matic	R970 053
GLE 400 4-Matic	R968 747
GLE 500 4-Matic	R1 181 287
Mercedes-AMG GLE 63 4-Matic	R1 726 006
Mercedes-AMG GLE 63 S 4-Matic	R1 855 006

*Includes CO₂ tax

Mercedes-Benz GLE Coupé*

GLE 350d 4-Matic	R1 005 674
GLE 450 AMG 4-Matic	R1 110 057
Mercedes-AMG GLE 63 S 4-Matic	R1 876 111

*Includes CO₂ tax




Stand-out model

While all the models are very desirable (albeit quite pricey) in terms of luxury, power, performance and comfort, in my view the 350d 4-Matic stands out when it comes to versatility and usability for the price, as well as off-road prowess.

Its torquey turbocharged V6 diesel is powerful enough to tackle any type of terrain, and works well with the new 9G-Tronic transmission.

Add the Off-Road Engineering package (for an additional R48 500) and you have a very capable post-Jurassic off-roader as well...

However, if you have some serious jungle off-roading in mind, stick to the 17-inch wheel and tyre combination, as those massive optional 20 or 21-inch tyres will not help one bit when you are chased by Indominus rex ... 



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The same detailed approach to quality goes into every Engen Lubricant, ensuring that your vehicle is kept in supreme condition and protected every step of the way. Made with the finest base oils and leading additives, they're designed to guard your engine against wear and corrosion, even in Africa's harsh environment. We put our best in, so that you can get the best out.

With us you are Number One



The new Volvo XC90 is a lot of car to experience in just one day. Volvo has basically rewritten the rule book on large, luxury SUVs by implementing a number of firsts for this particular segment. This can be daunting when you first settle in behind the wheel.

I knew it would be a lot to handle, because our first test car came with its own butler to explain the numerous tricks and gadgets on the inside. That's never happened at any vehicle launch I've been to before!

The "butler" gave my colleague a quick run-down on the basics, such as how to get the car started and how to access the menu with

the various driving modes, but any further exploration had to be done in our own time.

I was lucky enough to ride shotgun for the first 100km leg of the journey which was, to be honest, exactly what I was hoping for.

Of all the new technology in the car, I was most interested in the XC90's minimalist interior and the touch-screen interface that has replaced 90% of the buttons you'd usually find in a luxury vehicle.

It's daunting at first, but if you are familiar with the operating system of a tablet, you will have no problems in the Volvo. It's fast, responds beautifully to touches and swipes

and, most importantly, is highly intuitive.

Within five minutes of setting off from Cape Town Airport we had our seats set just so, the temperature at a nice and comfy 22°C and our phones connected via Bluetooth, streaming our favourite tunes. Normally it would take anything from a week to a few months to fully understand all the features of a new luxury vehicle, but the average person would be well acquainted with this car within a few hours.

I had planned to investigate the interior further, but my colleague interrupted me with an enquiry:

"Are you sure this is a two-litre model?"

Minimalist car with maximum luxury

Volvo has decided to replace the beloved XC90, more than a decade after it first arrived in SA. The new model has definitely been worth the wait...





We had received the press release a few weeks in advance and I remembered a paragraph stating that all models had a capacity of around 2000cc, so I responded in the affirmative.

"Won't you just take a quick look at the specification sheet to make sure, because this sure doesn't feel like any two-litre diesel I've ever driven," he said.

It was certainly a 2,0-litre, but it was easy to see why the driver was surprised at the responses from the relatively small engine.

The D5, which is the first of two models currently available, delivers 165kW and 470Nm of torque. You'd think there would be massive amounts of lag, but the engine feels similar to larger capacity turbocharged diesels. There's some lag when you set off, but it's all but forgotten within a few seconds.

The eight-speed automatic gearbox, which is standard across the range, does a splendid job of swapping cogs. You can take manual control if you want to, but I see no reason why you would do so. The XC90 does an admirable job on its own.

As Volvo has focused heavily on fuel consumption and output rather than a large number of cylinders, the XC90 D5 is claimed to use only 5,8l/100km on the combined cycle.

After a short presentation from the organisers, I swapped the diesel for a T6 petrol. This is the most powerful model available in SA until the T8 hybrid arrives early next year. The T6 produces 235kW and 400Nm, so obviously I had to sample this unit on the famous Franschoek Pass.

In its sportiest setting, it responded nicely for such a large car. It cornered well, but since I don't see the point of driving a large luxury SUV to the limits of its tyres' adhesion, we

The XC90's interior sets a new segment standard in terms of user/car interface. That large touch-screen has replaced most of the buttons on the centre console and it responds beautifully to touches and swipes.

Below: Seven seats and still more than enough space for the dog! The XC90 has always been good at this sort of thing and it is a design element that has been carried over to the new model.



went in search of a nice gravel road to see if the XC90 would perform as well off the tar road as it did on it.

It performed very well on a wet, rutted road, as you would expect from an all-wheel drive vehicle. Most of these Volvos will never see this kind of surface, but it's nice to know that the XC90 feels secure on a relatively smooth and wet gravel road at 110km/h. The fancy electronics stop any slip and slide action, while the suspension is more than capable of protecting the driver and passengers from bouncing around.

Speaking of passengers, it's worth noting that the XC90 can accommodate a lot of them. It transforms into a seven-seater within seconds, and retains a decent amount of cargo space even with all the seats folded up.

Quality is exceptional all round, and this is probably the safest car you can buy at this level.

The XC90 comes fully equipped with the

IntelliSafe package as standard, delivering two world firsts – Run-off Road Protection and Auto Brake at Intersections. This is over and above the usual features you would expect in a vehicle made by a manufacturer that has built its reputation on vehicle safety.

The XC90 is an exceptional car. It offers massive amounts of space, unparalleled safety specifications, luxury and a decent drive at a price that undercuts its main rivals, such as the BMW X5 and Mercedes Benz GLE, by a significant margin.

I'm not ready to call the XC90 the segment leader just yet, but I have a feeling that it just might be. Perhaps a large luxury SUV shoot-out is needed before we can make that call?

Currently only D5 and T6 derivatives are available, but D4 and T5 models will join the line-up towards the end of the year. The T8 hybrid will be here in the first half of 2016. **LW**

– Gerhard Horn

In the heart of a super pod

Land Rover recently invited *Leisure Wheels* to join marine biologist Monty Halls while he investigated the annual sardine run. What we encountered was beyond belief

Text: Gerhard Horn Photography: Supplied

What's the most beautiful thing you have ever seen? Think about that for a few seconds and decide on a single moment that blew your mind – a moment that you'll treasure and that will stick in your mind for the rest of your life.

That's what we went in search of when Land Rover invited *Leisure Wheels* along on the Shoals of Agulhas expedition, hosted by a man called Monty Halls.

Most South Africans won't recognise the name, but Monty has made a name for himself as a marine biologist and documentary film maker. His documentaries are spectacular. Do yourself a favour and Google his name.

The only issue for *Leisure Wheels* was the lack of a scuba diving qualification among the staff. None of us had done it before, but fortunately six weeks was more than enough time to get certified in time to join the expedition for a few days.

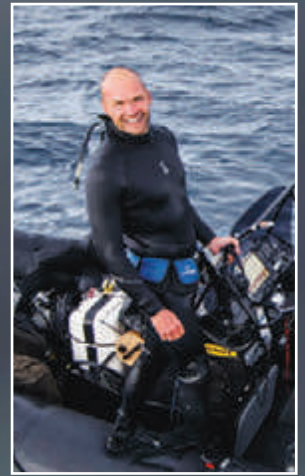
The invitation revealed that we would have the opportunity to sample the new Discovery Sport off-road, visit the Born Free Foundation near Port Elizabeth and see Monty's specially built Defender called Marine One (see info box) up close, but the main mission was to experience the annual sardine run. This meant close encounters with seals, dolphins, whales and sharks. No cages – just there among the formidable sea creatures. What a prospect!

Day 1: Born Free Foundation

As an introduction to two days of pending adventure, we were treated to a quick visit to the Born Free Foundation near Port Elizabeth. Four Canadians who had won a global Land Rover competition and the adventure of a lifetime joined our excited group, and after a quick introduction, we sat down to a presentation on park safety.

We were expecting a quick tour through the large animal enclosures, but it soon became clear that our hosts had something special planned for us.

One of the lionesses had to be tranquillized for a medical procedure and we would be tagging along for the ride. After our interesting



encounter with the lioness and her protective partner, we worked our way through the numerous enclosures to see the animals Born Free had saved over the last few years.

Our guide told us how the animals had ended up there. There were sad stories about all the animals, but there was a particular lion called Simba that stood out. His previous owners had kept him for entertainment purposes, and to ensure that he would not bite anyone, they removed most of his teeth. Born Free has to shred his meat for him – an indication of how far these kind people will go to save a single animal.

We also encountered an unfortunate rhino that had had its horns removed by poachers. Instead of simply cutting the horns and leaving the stump, they cut deep into the flesh, exposing a giant cavity underneath. The rhino survived, but the pain it endured was hard to imagine. Thanks to Born Free, it is slowly but surely recovering from its injury.

The overall picture on rhino poaching is bleak. If nothing drastic happens to improve things, there will be no rhinos left in SA by 2020. The problem has escalated to a point that we were asked not to reveal details of where we slept, or tag a rhino sighting on social media, out of fear

that poachers will come across the information and go after the animals.

The message was clear. Human beings are predators. We like to think of sharks as nature's ultimate killing machine, but the fact is that no animal is as good at killing as humans are.

Day 2: An encounter with a super pod

From the start, the expedition organisers made it clear that our chances of actually encountering the sardine run were slim. A storm had been brewing all around us the previous day and the rain finally came down hard that evening. Lying in bed that night, listening to the wind howling outside, we sensed that our small window of opportunity had closed.

Stepping outside on dive day was depressing. The weather hadn't cleared and the conditions were about as bad as they could be for diving. But instead of giving up on the idea, we climbed into the Land Rovers and set off for Port Alfred, two hours' drive away. Perhaps the weather would have improved by the time we got there.

There were spots of blue showing through



A Cape gannet enjoys the abundance of sardines. The sardine migration along the South African coast is one of the largest known to man, but is nevertheless something of a mystery.

Below: An inquisitive dolphin showing off for the Monty Halls' boat, Odyssey.



Driving the Discovery Sport

Due to a number of unforeseen circumstances over the last few months, I managed to miss every opportunity to drive the all-new Land Rover Discovery Sport. It is probably one of the most significant new models to reach SA in 2015, so when somebody asked me recently if I'd like to have a go, I was seated behind the wheel before he could finish the sentence!

The Discovery Sport is basically a new Freelander, even though Land Rover says it isn't. It's more or less the same size, uses the same engine, and has the same off-road ability, but costs a little bit more than the now defunct Freelander.

But it's now a Discovery – a badge that has done a lot for Land Rover over the past decade. And it's proud of that, judging by the in-your-face lettering across the clamshell bonnet.

I really like the way it looks. It's not as ostentatious as the Range Rover Sport, but it doesn't exactly blend into a crowd, either. In my view, Land Rover's current design ethos is spot on. It's immediately recognisable, with its perfect blend of muscle and sophistication.

The interior is very well executed. There are many standard features, and the quality of the materials is superb. It's also practical, which is something the people who use it for family holidays and off-road adventures will enjoy very much.

The highlight for me was the standard sound system. I wouldn't even recommend the high-end system, as the standard one does a pretty good job of delivering outstanding sound quality at high volume.

On tar, the Sport was a masterpiece. The new nine-speed automatic gearbox does a stellar job in and around town. The steering is light when you are buzzing around at low speed, but it weighs up nicely as the pace increases.

I drove mostly on gravel, however, and that's where the Disco really excels. I was following a Defender for the entire route and couldn't help but notice how the passengers in that car were bouncing up and down on a few badly corrugated roads. In the Disco Sport we were perfectly

comfortable. It's like off-roading in a Lufthansa business class seat.

The Sport basically does all the work for you. It comes as standard with Land Rover's Terrain Response system, so you just tell it about the type of surface you're on and point it where you want to go.

The 2,2-litre turbocharged diesel engine feels a bit outdated, but power figures are still decent

enough. It delivers 140kW and 420Nm of torque, and the fuel consumption on the trip averaged around 10l/100km.

It's worth noting that the Disco Sport's current engine line-up will soon be replaced by a host of all-new petrol and diesel offerings, so if you're in the market, hold off until these models arrive.



skies cleared, the sea would still be rough, and scuba diving would be out of the question.

The weather did clear in Port Alfred, but as expected the logistics team confirmed that we wouldn't be diving that day. There was still a chance of some snorkel action, if the experienced local skippers gave the go-ahead.

Those first few minutes in Port Alfred were a strange time. We had put on our wetsuits, just in case the skippers gave the thumbs up. Monty was on the phone a lot, and plans seemed to changed every 30 seconds.

We finally received word that we'd be going out to explore, but there would be no diving. The swells were massive and the surges down below would be too dangerous.

The boats arrived, and we were given a skipper's safety briefing on the go, to give you some idea of how small our weather gap was. We were lucky enough to ride in Monty's own boat, Odyssey, which was shipped out to SA along with his once-off Defender, Marine One.

The skipper introduced himself as Louis and he gave us a quick briefing as we made our way down the lagoon towards the surf. His calm demeanour was reassuring, but tension rose when he asked for absolute silence as we approached the surf. Louis needed to concentrate 100% to get it right, and we were only too happy to oblige.

The surf was wild, but Louis didn't show a hint of anxiety. Even when Odyssey ramped over one wave, hung in the air for a second and then came down hard, his expression remained stone cold – a real cool skipper!

Conditions weren't much better out in the open sea. The waves were 10m high, and we couldn't see a thing.

Monty made the call to split the three boats up to cover a bigger area. If one of the boats spotted anything interesting, it could radio the coordinates to the others.

The first hour passed with nothing but wave after wave to look at. We knew our chances were bleak, but we couldn't help feeling despondent after the initial excitement of crashing through the surf.

Then there was a shout of, "Over there!" It was a pod of dolphins – wonderful to see

Below and right: Brett Andersen, winner of Land Rover's Spirit of Adventure international competition, had the opportunity to get up close and personal with SA's wildlife. Professionals from the Born Free Foundation drugged both animals for medical procedures.



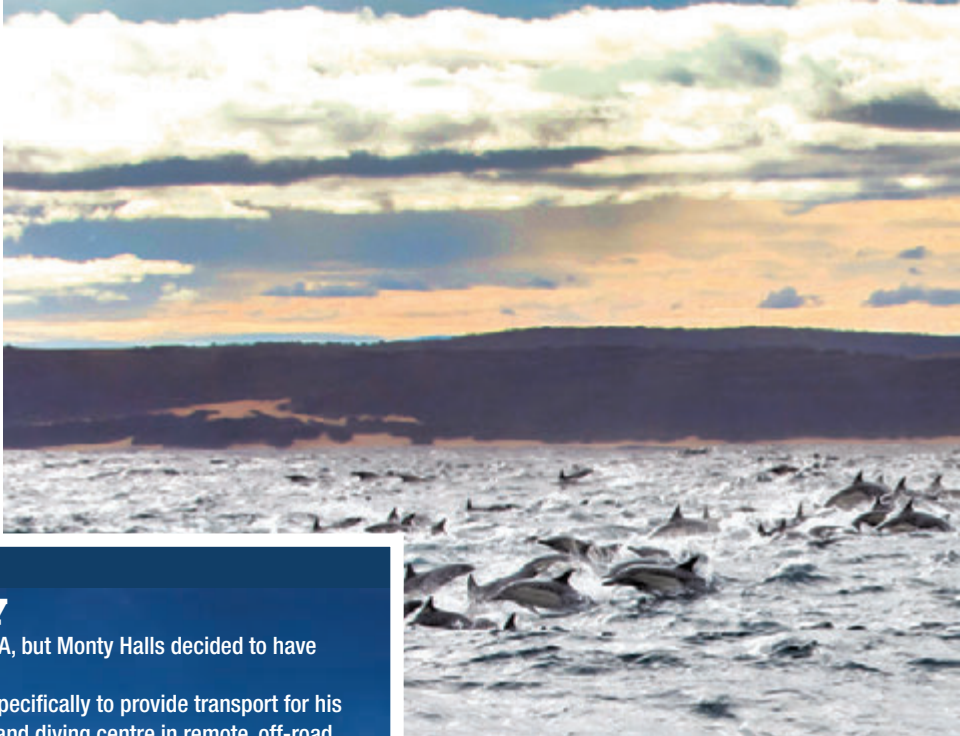
The Born Free Foundation saved this rhino's life by covering the open wound with a metal plate, which was removed shortly before our arrival.

ADVENTURE ON WATER

SHOALS OF AGULHAS



Dolphins feasting on a sardine bait ball. Right: A small section of the super pod, consisting of 3000 to 4000 dolphins.



Marine One and Odyssey

There are loads of boats and Land Rover Defenders in SA, but Monty Halls decided to have his own equipment shipped in from the UK.

His modified Defender, called Marine One, was built specifically to provide transport for his diving and film crew as well as serve as a mobile base and diving centre in remote, off-road locations.

The vehicle is packed with clever engineering and design features, including bespoke storage for diving air tanks, a water tank and a hosing facility for cleaning kit. There is a sliding table strong enough to hold 200kg, and an awning to give protection from the elements.

The boat, Odyssey, is a Humber Ocean Pro 7,5m expedition RIB and is powered by Suzuki Marine's DF200AP motor.

We don't know much about boats, but this one looks the business. If Batman had to fight crime on the high seas, this is the boat he'd use to do it.



in the open water. Dolphins are naturally inquisitive and soon they were breaching at speed next to the boat.

Louis decided to follow the dolphins, in the hope that they would lead us to something interesting, but it soon became apparent that we had started leading the dolphins. They were as interested in us as we were in them.

It was time for a quick snorkelling session, but I couldn't join in because of a faulty snorkel. It was disappointing, but at that point we had no idea of the majestic sight that was waiting a mere 30 minutes away.

With my colleagues safely back on board, we waited for the other boats to arrive and then set off after the dolphins in the hope that we'd get another chance to snorkel with them.

The second time round the cameraman commented that the dolphins seemed more focused on something other than hanging out with us. More dolphins joined the pod, which was a good sign.

The silence was interrupted by a shout from a highly excited Louis: "It's going to happen. It's going to happen!"

We found ourselves in the middle of an open water frenzy. On one side of the boat we saw two humpback whales breaching. On the other side were hundreds of dolphins. Cape gannets were hovering above and Louis kept on telling us that it was "going to happen".

We had stumbled across what was left of a "bait ball" – a massive cluster of sardines. There were now what seemed like thousands of dolphins and other sea creatures all around us. There was nothing left to do but jump in the water.

I jumped in, and within seconds was greeted by a friendly dolphin. For what felt like a minute, but was probably closer to 20 seconds, we stared at each other. There's



nothing more exciting than meeting a wild animal in its natural habitat, especially one as friendly as the average dolphin!

Unfortunately, I made a rookie snorkelling error. In the vertical position, my lungs were already a good 70cm under the water, which meant they were slightly compressed and my first breath struggled to make its way down the snorkel pipe. That's all it took for panic to set in. I got back in the boat, defeated by the overwhelming event surrounding us.

Luckily, the view from the top was almost as good as the view down below.

To keep up with the frenzy, Louis kept on picking us up, speeding past the pod and dropping us back in the water around 300m in front of it.

That's when I experienced the best moment ever. As the skipper overtook the pod and banked to the right for the last time, it was a perfect moment. The sun was setting behind the pod, a storm was brewing behind

us, but all we could see was a super pod of 3000 to 4000 dolphins barrelling down on us. It was unlike anything I had seen before, and the chances are very slim that it will ever happen to me again. You could tell from the faces of the cameramen that it was a once in a lifetime thing. They had seen it all before, perhaps, but they were just as childishly excited as we were.

The only reason we stopped chasing the dolphins was the storm. It had caught up with us and we needed to get out of there.

Back on land, the occasion was celebrated with champagne. The team had been careful to manage our expectations because of the unpredictability of the sea, but Mother Nature ended up being kind enough to give us the show of a lifetime.

Strange, isn't it? You travel the world to find the most beautiful thing you'll ever see, and it turns out to be about a kilometre offshore from Port Alfred. **LW**



Divetek

Scuba diving is an amazingly rewarding sport, but it is dangerous if you aren't trained properly.

In order to attend this particular expedition, I needed a specific diving qualification and was quite surprised to discover that there were several diving schools that were willing to offer a course over a weekend.

Divetek was not one of them. I was told outright that I needed to do proper training over a month. This is to ensure that any diver who qualifies with them is safe and comfortable in the water. Divetek have been training divers since 1984, so they really know what they are talking about.

Their shop also has everything you might need to get you started, and you can bank on good advice from their sales consultants.

I attended six evening classes and six pool sessions before I was allowed anywhere near the sea, and two or more instructors were always on hand to help out when necessary. The course includes diving sessions inland when the weather permits and a final qualifying dive session at Sodwana Bay.

By the time I hit the sea at Sodwana, I was very comfortable in the water and adept at operating in an emergency situation. In fact, on the very first dive my regulator came undone, but thanks to proper training, I knew the procedure and continued to dive for another 30 minutes with the reserve regulator.

Most people will be fine with a regular open water course, which allows you to dive anywhere up to 30m down.

The cost is insignificant considering the wonderful world that a diving qualification opens up for you, and Divetek regularly hosts events to diving hotspots all over SA.

We'd advise anyone interested to go the Divetek route as it ensures maximum safety and fun. They can be contacted at 011-791-1095 or www.divetek.co.za.

Off-road shakedown

We've had the Subaru Outback in our long-term fleet for a little while now, so it was time to give it a proper off-road shakedown. We joined Subaru SA just north of Pretoria to find out what the Outback could do

Text: GG van Rooyen Photography: Rowan Wilkinson

Is there any AWD vehicle that hides its off-road capability better than the Subaru Outback?

There are plenty of SUVs out there that look capable, but are actually 2WD and wouldn't be able to tackle even a basic obstacle. The Outback, meanwhile, could easily be mistaken for a pavement hopper – more station wagon than SUV.

But don't let its looks fool you. The Outback can handle some pretty hairy obstacles. Not only does it boast 213mm of ground clearance (that's bakkie level) but it also has Subaru's vaunted X-mode.

How does X-mode work? Well, at speeds of less than 40 km/h it puts the engine control unit into a dedicated torque map setting, improving driveability on rough roads, while the all-wheel-drive control unit alters settings to create

a semi-locked state for the central differential. In addition, the transmission control unit selects a lower gear ratio than normal.

A limited slip function across axles also comes into play, adding traction by controlling

brake pressures and aiming to maintain similar rotation speeds on both wheels. Hill descent operates in a similar way, kicking in at speeds below 20 km/h for steadier descents.

According to Subaru, its X-mode halves the time required to escape from obstacles, comfortably outperforming many other 4x4s.

A day at Sandwani

To prove just how capable these vehicles are, Subaru SA invited more than 40 new Outback owners to test their cars at the Sandwani 4x4 facility north of Pretoria. We went along with our long-term test vehicle.

The day kicked off with a traversal of Sandwani's technical training track, which featured steep slopes, axle twistlers, narrow bridges, rocky patches and unsettling side slopes.

Some of the proud new



Crossing a rather narrow bridge with the aid of an off-road driving instructor.

Outback owners were clearly nervous about subjecting their SUVs to these obstacles, but luckily experts from Baobab's 4x4 driver training team, who are responsible for all Subaru SA's training, were on hand to help them through.

It quickly became clear, though, that these obstacles didn't present much of a challenge for the Outback. Even the daunting axle twistlers were dispatched without too much hassle. Whenever traction became an issue, the vehicle's traction control system would kick in, sending power to the wheels that were still on the ground, and allowing the Outback to escape from the ditches.

Another stand-out feature was the Outback's hill descent control. Some of these systems don't provide enough braking, forcing one to either work the brake or descend at a speed that is uncomfortably brisk.

Not so with the Outback. The Subaru's system allowed us to descend at a very slow and steady pace. We never needed to touch the brake.

Into the bush

There may have been some apprehension when it was first announced that the convoy was going to tackle Sandwani's test track, but the Subarus were more than up to the challenge. Everyone relaxed, and a fun couple of hours were spent finding out just how far these vehicles could be pushed.

But soon it was time for a quick trip to the nearby town of Cullinan, where a great lunch had been prepared at the iconic Jan Harmsgat.

After lunch it was back to Sandwani for the second part of the Subaru shakedown.

Across the road from the 4x4 test track is a large open area where a more traditional 4x4 trail has been constructed, and it was this track that the group now tackled.

Most of the route consisted of fairly easy gravel, but there were a few sections that were quite difficult and required some careful driving. There were some steep descents, as well as sandy climbs that caught out a couple of the Outbacks. The cars couldn't really be faulted, though. The drivers had simply been overly cautious, not fully believing that the vehicles could handle the tough obstacles. But they could, and by the end of the day the Outback owners had discovered that their cars were indeed very capable.

Of course, the Outback is not a hardcore 4x4. It certainly isn't designed for grade-5 obstacles. It doesn't have the low-range

gearing needed for that. But it is as capable as just about any other compact SUV. Moreover, it provides a whole lot of space, great on-road comfort and excellent performance.

As far as shortcomings are concerned, the Outback does have a couple. Firstly, it is a very long vehicle, and that length does limit its manoeuvrability. Secondly, the front overhang is pronounced, and decreases the approach angle.

But, overall, the off-road abilities of the Outback impressed us. It is more capable than it needs to be.

This certainly isn't a station wagon. It's an SUV. And a very capable one at that. **LW**



Above: The Subaru Outbacks were put through their paces at the Sandwani 4x4 training facility, just north of Pretoria. All sorts of obstacles had to be negotiated. Below: The wide array of Outbacks at the event were all driven by their new (and proud) owners.



READER'S IMPRESSION

MITSUBISHI PAJERO GLX LWB

Although the reports and shoot-outs published in *Leisure Wheels* are always appreciated and enjoyed, I do believe that readers should be encouraged to offer their own opinions about the vehicles they drive. After all, owners have the experience of driving and servicing a vehicle over a long period, which often provides a different perspective.

My experience with SUVs began many years ago. I have owned and driven Land Rovers, a Toyota Hilux and a Jeep Cherokee.

In 2007, I had to purchase a new vehicle because the Jeep I was driving had done more than 300 000km. I decided on the Pajero GLX long wheelbase diesel model.

Why choose a Pajero?

What are the factors that need to be considered when deciding on a new SUV? My needs were that the vehicle had to have ample loading space, be reasonably capable off road (with good ground clearance) and have sufficient power to haul a trailer. I cover long distances on tar roads when driving to remote destinations, so decent comfort was an added requirement.

The Toyota 70 was a new model in 2007. It was competitively priced and from the proven Toyota stable, but I found it disappointing that, for more than a month, the local dealer simply could not arrange for a demonstration vehicle to be made available. This was the

main reason I did not consider the Toyota 70 any further.

The Discovery 3TD V6 certainly impressed, but the difference in price was the main reason for not again purchasing a Land Rover. At R450 000, it was R57 000 more expensive than the Pajero. I might add that, being somewhat conservative, I was also wary of all the electronics!

The Jeep was next in the running. Sadly, the relatively high fuel consumption experienced with my Cherokee, combined with poor and unreliable service from a dealer in Stellenbosch, ruled out this vehicle.

I was left with two choices: a Mitsubishi



When offering an opinion on a new vehicle, most drivers are obviously making their judgements after a relatively short period behind the wheel. There might be a very different view after many years spent with a vehicle. Pajero owner Alan Saunders shares his impressions of Mitsubishi's popular SUV, having lived (and travelled) with it for eight years

Living with a Pajero



Pajero and a Toyota Prado. The difference in power (120kW for the Pajero versus 96kW for the Prado) as well as poor fuel economy reported by friends who owned Prados, were factors I considered.

Moreover, as with the Toyota 70, the Stellenbosch dealer could not arrange for a demonstration model. Meanwhile, Eikestad Motors, agents for Pajero, made a vehicle available to us for a whole day! This gesture contributed significantly to the final decision to purchase the Pajero GLX 3,2-litre diesel.

The vehicle was delivered in August 2007 for a base price of R396 500. Extras such as a roof rack, tow bar, additional spare wheel, cruise control and iPod jack were added for another R31 973.

Operating costs

The vehicle has recently been in for its 150 000km service. The original purchase came with a 90 000km service plan, so the first service paid for was done at 100 000km.

The service interval is 10 000km, so six

services have been carried out following the end of the 90 000km service plan. These services have cost an average of R4330, and included the replacement of the alternator at the 120 000km service because of bearing failure in the original. No other major expenses have been incurred over the 150 000km, which brings the total service and maintenance costs to around 17c/km.

The excellent fuel economy has arguably been the Pajero's most impressive achievement. The average overall consumption has remained at about 10 litres per 100km. When I tow a Venter Voyager trailer, the consumption increases to around 11,5 or 12 litres per 100km.

On tar, I generally set the cruise control at 120km/h, but the actual speed would be closer to 115km/h. At current fuel prices of R12 per litre, the Pajero's average fuel economy would be R1,20/km.

The vehicle was originally fitted with Bridgestone Dueller H/T tyres, and a new set

was fitted at 72 000km. The second set lasted 58 000km, and at 130 000km a set of Hankook Dynapro ATM tyres were fitted. Although the Hankook tyres are a little noisier on tar, I believe the slightly thicker sidewalls provide better protection in the rough. To date, the fitment of tyres has cost 18c/km.

Insurances and licensing would add 39c/km, bringing the total operating cost to R1,94/km over the 150 000km travelled.

Engine whine

The vehicle developed a peculiar whining noise in the engine at 30 000km during a trip to Botswana, which the local agents in Stellenbosch, Paarl and Paarden Eiland could not rectify. The turbo, fuel pump and fuel injectors were replaced, but all to no avail. When the local agent declared that there was nothing more they could do, I called in the help of the Motor Industries Ombudsman.

Mitsubishi SA eventually had the vehicle taken to Pretoria, where the problem was attended to and corrected at no cost to me as the vehicle was still under warranty. Mitsubishi SA told me that the technicians had replaced and reset the turbo, but it did seem strange that the local dealers had purportedly done the

We want to hear from you!

Fancy yourself as something of a motoring journalist, or would you just like to share your ownership experiences? Well, we want to hear from you. It doesn't matter whether your vehicle is a 2015 model that you have owned for a couple of months, or a 1974 Landy that you inherited from your grandfather. We just want to hear about the joys and sorrows of driving and maintaining a leisure vehicle. Just remember that your vehicle needs to be an SUV or a double cab bakkie, though it doesn't necessarily need to have 4WD.

Submissions can be sent to jannie@leisurewheels.com.





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same thing, to no avail.

While this was an annoying experience at the time, I was most impressed by the manner in which Mitsubishi SA eventually handled the situation, having the Pajero transferred to Pretoria and providing a replacement vehicle, but it is doubtful whether this would have happened had I not gone to the Ombudsman.

In any case, this is rather irrelevant now, since distributorship of Mitsubishi vehicles in SA has since changed hands.

Driving impressions

Over the past eight years, the Pajero has been on ten major trips, totalling close to 50 000km.

During most of them a Venter trailer was towed, and when we ventured into Botswana and Namibia, the roof rack with jerry cans and a second spare wheel were added to the load.

The 3,2-litre diesel engine has no difficulty in maintaining the cruising speed, though fuel economy predictably deteriorates to around 12l/100km when the vehicle is fully loaded and towing the trailer. But compare this to the 18 or 20 litres per 100km experienced in the 1999 Jeep Cherokee!

Without a load, fuel consumption on tar at a cruising speed is about 9,5l/100km. The Pajero has an 81-litre fuel tank, and the low-level fuel light normally comes on after 700-750km of tar driving without a load.

The automatic five-speed transmission is smooth. It is not full-time 4x4, and in our circle of friends there is always a discussion on when to engage four-wheel drive. My philosophy has always been to engage part-time 4x4 whenever driving off tar or towing a trailer.

Travelling in the Pajero is very comfortable, even for those sitting in the back, since there is ample legroom. On gravel roads the vehicle is very stable, especially when 4x4 is engaged.

The only negative, as far as I am concerned, is that the two back windows do not wind down completely. This has been somewhat irritating for the folk in the back when we are out in the bush.

Off-road driving

Off-road trips have usually involved sand driving in Botswana, with some rather rough tracks in Damaraland, Namibia and the Langeberg mountains of the southern Cape thrown in.

Shorter trips into the Cederberg and the Karoo have also been undertaken, mainly on reasonable gravel roads, though there was also some proper trail driving.

In sand, the vehicle performs exceptionally well. The main decision for the driver is when to select low range. In extreme conditions, the ability to select manual gear shifting is a bonus, especially when dealing with a down slope, as this gives the driver better control.

The centre differential lock has been useful on occasion, especially when travelling on very wet and slippery dirt roads. The vehicle is then much more stable.

The rear diff lock has only been engaged twice, and we would probably have been able to manage without it, but why not use it if it's there?

The 225mm ground clearance is probably not sufficient for truly difficult trails.

In my opinion, most modern SUVs are more than capable in most situations. Success generally has more to do with the driver than the vehicle.

Verdict

The Pajero is comfortable, has ample power to haul a trailer and is more than capable in the rough stuff.

What do I like most about the vehicle? Probably its fuel economy. For a large vehicle, it really is quite frugal. Its 4x4 ability has also impressed.

If forced to point out a negative, I'd probably mention the noisy and rather agricultural engine. But overall, the Pajero has been an excellent steed. **LW**

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SIGHTS AND SOUNDS OF BOKVLAKTE

Hot springs, hot chicks and hot pizza!

Springbokvlakte farmer Mike Bosch with one of his Boschveld chickens, bred especially to handle the toughest conditions in Africa. Just like a Toyota Fortuner, some would say! Mike has owned three Fortuner 4x4s from new, selling each of them with around 200 000km on the clock, without a day's trouble.

The Springbokvlakte in Limpopo are 130km long and 80km wide, and include towns such as Bela-Bela, Modimolle, Mookgophong and Mokopane. On our visit we discovered a unique chicken breed, awesome pies, hot water springs and much more. We also met one of Bela-Bela's best-known Toyota fans. This is the story of the Springbokvlakte – where the tales are sometimes tall, and often hot!

Text: Danie Botha Photography: Jannie Herbst





The fountain of... everything?

The hot water springs in Bela-Bela, formerly Warmbaths, are one of Springbokvlakte's main attractions. People flock there to experience the geothermally heated groundwater. At peak holiday times, Forever Resort Bela-Bela is like a manic beehive, populated by grand city folk who make the short trek from Gauteng and plattelanders for whom the springs are their own Indian Ocean.

But are the springs more than just a hot swimming pool? Are there special healing powers in the soothing water? It sure seems like it. AB de Villiers, SA's premier batsman, hails from Bela-Bela. His dad is a local physician, and everyone knows him.

There are many creative characters here, too. For instance, two newspaper columnists draw their inspiration from the Springbokvlakte and its people.

Keina Swart is co-owner of *The Post*, an award-winning local community newspaper, and a popular columnist for *Die Burger* newspaper. She has lived in the area for 20 years and says that although she had reservations at first, she will probably never move away. The vlakte grow on you.

"There are so many interesting people here," says Keina. "But I also quickly learned that you can't just write what you want, even if it is the truth. This is a small, close

Above: Angel Scrap in the town of Bela-Bela boasts a variety of antiques and memorabilia. Right: Rhonel Pienaar runs Angel Scrap. She is also an artist, and sells her paintings in the shop.



Above, left to right: Thaba Kwena is situated between Bela-Bela and Modimolle. If you are interested in big reptiles, this is just the place to visit! Adventures with Elephants offers visitors unique interaction with elephants; The Forever Resorts Warmbaths in Bela-Bela is a popular destination.

#TELLBETTERSTORIES

SIGHTS AND SOUNDS OF THE SPRINGBOKVLAKTE

community. We see each other almost every day – in the bank, at the filling station, or at the school. So whatever you do, you still have to look people in the eye.”

Of course, small communities thrive on gossip. And one character who has probably been the topic of more stories than most is pioneering chicken farmer Mike Bosch. The charming farmer, who would be a huge hit on the dating television show, *Boer soek 'n Vrou*, says he isn't bothered about marriage. He's got enough on his plate with the booming



chicken business. You can bet your bottom dollar that there are several single ladies in Bela-Bela who would strongly disagree with the widower's sentiments.

Mike, who owns a few properties in the area, started breeding a “new” chicken species 15 years ago and since then more than two million Boschveld chickens have flown their Bela-Bela coop and resettled elsewhere in Africa.

What makes this chicken so popular, says Mike, is that it is extremely hardy.

“The Boschveld chicken lives off the land so it will survive, if necessary, on what Mother Nature provides,” he says. “It is also resilient to disease and can withstand varying climatic conditions. We will have to expand our operation. We can't deliver enough chickens at the moment.”

Mike is a big Toyota fan – one who calls a German bakkie with a two-litre engine all kinds of names. He has owned no less than three Fortuners over the years. All of them were white 3.0D4-D 4x4s, and he bought them new and sold them with about 200 000km on the clock.

“My kids are bigger now, so I don't need the versatility of the Fortuner anymore. The kids have loads of sporting gear, so the double cab Hilux's big bak works better for me nowadays,” he says.

He used the Fortuners for many overland trips. On one of them a friend's Nissan double cab bakkie, towing a large boat, got stuck in Mozambique's sand. “So I towed the bakkie and the boat out of the sand with the Fortuner,” says Mike.

“In all of about 600 000km in the three Fortuners we never had one mechanical problem.”

Now meet Rhonel Pienaar, who runs the Angel Scrap antique shop. It's much more than an antique shop, though. Since the town's public library closed down, Bela Bela's residents have had no ready access to reading material. So Rhonel opened a “book house”. Books are donated and are available to everyone. You can borrow books at will, and return them – on trust.

“We don't keep records or charge any money. That would just complicate matters no end,” says Rhonel, who also runs a small restaurant on the premises.

The shop features a wide range of antiques, Rhonel's paintings and art work and a collection of LPs from yonks ago.

“More and more people are bringing in their old things,” she says. “You can see they have sentimental value, but money is scarce, and people need food on the table. I buy everything that people bring in. It probably doesn't make good business sense, but I'm



Rinah Modise of Platteland Decor, which is situated in the Peet se Padstal complex, busy with a piece of artwork that will be sold at the padstal.

not here to make millions, anyway.”

A doef-doef here and a doef-doef there...

The two-horse town of Settlers, about 25km from Bela-Bela, has seen better days. The hotel, said to have been a controversial hotspot where farmers were often collected by red-faced wives in the early hours of the morning, is no longer operational. Actually, it's falling to pieces.

Nowadays the dorpie's only watering hole is at the Springbokflats Bowling Club. The bar overlooks the greens, which seem as out of place in Settlers as an elephant would be in the centre of Johannesburg. Every blue moon, they say, the locals do get together for a game of bowls, heavily supported by service from the bar. Now that would be something to see – a bunch of farmer types in their khakis running after their bowls, a glass of brandy in hand!

Next to the bowling club is the museum – the tractor and engine museum.

Robbie Weir was one of the founders of the Veteran Tractor and Engine Club in 2002, and



the museum followed in 2010.

Every Thursday the club members get together at a central venue and tinker with their old engines. Today the museum premises are bursting at the seams with ancient machinery, the oldest engine dating back to 1917.

There is a story about Robbie, too. A man with a fuel tanker was sent to his farm to deliver diesel. The delivery man had strict instructions not to leave the premises before he received payment. So the man arrived, but Robbie was away on business. The delivery man waited and waited, but there was no sign of Robbie.

So he left the diesel at the farm, and returned to his office empty handed. His manager threw a fit but the delivery man, who'd had plenty of time to examine the old tractors and engines on Robbie's farm, had his answer: "Don't worry chief," he said. "That man will pay. He has so much money he even paints his old scrap!"

Robbie and the other old boys spend many



Top: Tannie Lisbeth Erasmus is the only member of the Sheep's Head Guild who can still cook a sheep's head right and proper. Unfortunately, the guild is running out of members. Above: Gerrit Fourie (seated) and Robbie Weir are two of the "old boys" of the Veteran Tractor and Engine Club. Their collection of old machines has outgrown the museum building in Settlers, situated next to the Springbokvlakte Bowling Club.



hours at the museum, passionate about their hobby. A 1932 Farmall F30 is fired to life, and you can see the glint of pride in the eyes of Robbie and his colleague, Gerrit Fourie.

"We call it 'first smoke' when a long-dead engine is fired up for the first time. In Europe the builders celebrate with a glass of champagne... here we gooi a bit of brandy and Coke," says Robbie. And probably go for a game of bowls next door too, we suspect.

Petro Hansen is a columnist for *Beeld* newspaper, and lives on a farm next to the Settlers road. Her husband is the local veterinarian also farms with Sable antelope.

She has also lived here for two decades, and has a keen sense of the out of the ordinary. Like people who specialise in cooking the heads of sheep. And eating them.

The Sheep's Head Guild is a unique institution. But Tannie Lisbeth Erasmus, the last of the guild's recognised sheep head cookers, is feeling under the weather. We hear that the guild has, in any case, just about run dry in membership. It seems the younger generation of cooks in Springbokvlakte is not interested in Tannie Lisbeth's recipes any more.

Beer and pizza... Springbokvlakte-style!

Drive about 30km west of Bela-Bela, on the Thabazimbi road, and you'll find L'Abri farm, road stall and eatery.

Owner Andries Saunders is adamant that it is not a restaurant, despite its reputation for serving the best pizzas in all of the Springbokvlakte.



Above: The hot water springs in Bela-Bela seem to have some magic creative ingredient. Two acclaimed columnists reside in the town. Petro Hansen writes for *Beeld* and *Die Burger* newspapers and Keina Swart (left, here with her husband Niel) is the author of multiple books. She is also co-owner of *The Post*, the local newspaper, and her writings regularly appear in *Beeld* and *Die Burger*. The Ford F100 bakkie in the picture has a very long story to tell.

"This is a farm, not a restaurant," explains Andries while he pours one of his craft beers. "If you come here expecting a Spur or a fancy restaurant you will be disappointed. Here we kuier like we do with our friends. It's all informal, like a braai at your buddy's house."

Suzette, Andries's wife, serves up a pizza. They call it an Upington. The topping includes cheese, grapes and biltong, and it is very good.

The recipe for the base hails from an old Italian lady who once lived nearby, and the combination is outstanding. No wonder regular customers are said to drive all the way from Gauteng for a pizza.

The craft beer at L'Abri is gaining a reputation as well. The range includes L'Abri Lager, Cockpit Brewery, Bunny Beer, Beertjie Beer, Old Horny and Park Hop. It's a delightful selection of tastes.

Also alongside the Thabazimbi road is Peet se Padstal. It has grown in recent times, and you could spend hours here, sifting through the arts, crafts and antiques.

A "Peet Special" is the offering of some interesting beverages, such as Jan-se-agteroor-moer-mampoer, dikbekpille and a

Yolandie Wilson of Peet se Padstal, ready to bake its famous *boerbrode*.





Above: Andries Saunders, who farms at L'Abri, near Bela-Bela, brews his own craft beer.
 Left: His wife, Suzette, with their Upington pizza – a delicious blend of grapes, biltong and cheese.
 Right: With names such as Old Horny and Beertjie Beer, L'Abri's craft beers offer a taste for everyone!



special soap ring for men, with a strategic hole in the middle so that you can hang it up in the shower.

The road stall is renowned for its home-baked confectionaries, not to mention the best pie you'll ever eat. The lamb pie and the fresh boerbrood are most memorable.

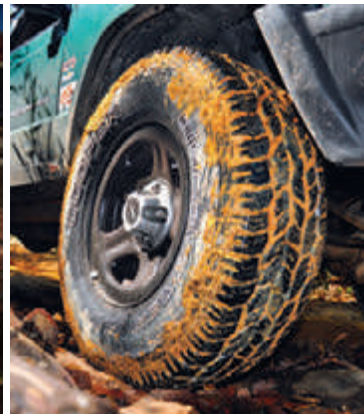
A rainbow of lekker!

So the Springbokvlakte has seen better, more prosperous days. In Bela-Bela's suburbs, the "For Sale" signs pegged into the beautiful lawns are outnumbered only by the pot holes in some of the streets.

Nevertheless, the Springbokvlakte region has much to offer the weekend visitor – interesting people, fascinating places and special experiences are just an hour's drive north of Pretoria. From the Springbokflats Bowling Club bar in Settlers to the pizza and beer of L'Abri – not forgetting the hot springs in Bela-Bela – there is a lot of good to right any wrongs. This is still one of the hottest places in Limpopo. **LW**

More information: www.belabelatoursim.co.za

Standard tyres are usually geared for highway driving, which means they are not suited to heavy-duty off-roading. It is recommended that owners fit the right tyre for the job. From left to right are examples of rock, mud and sand tyres.



Essential tyre deflation tips

The subject of tyre deflation is as controversial as the Karoo fracking debate – the science is sound but the reality may be far from it

Text and Photography: Grant Spolander

It's a numbers game. With so many variables at play, many off-road enthusiasts battle to agree on figures – more specifically, on what tyre pressure to use in a particular terrain type.

While the topic of tyre deflation certainly bears elements of scientific fact, the reality of what actually works and what doesn't is often better suited to an anecdotal approach.

Unfortunately, with a near-infinite number of terrain types available, it's not easy to be sure which pressure is best for the job. The point is further complicated by other variables, such as tyre size (larger tyres need more deflation), vehicle mass (including payload) and tyre construction (sidewall

thickness). One must also consider pressure fluctuations caused by heat, and rising road temperatures during the day.

In the end, the art of tyre deflation is best mastered through a process of trial and error – one determined by personal preference, vehicle set-up and load, and tyre brand.

As a guide, here are a few tyre tips to consider:

Always deflate

Most vehicle manufacturers (and tyre brands) will tell you to stick to your vehicle's recommended tyre pressure – given in the service manual. However, most 4x4 training courses advise that your tyres be deflated

when you go off-road. The information is often conflicting, but if you are undecided, don't let traction be your motivating factor. Also consider the environment. A deflated tyre is safer, more comfortable, and far less harmful to the environment. But be warned, if anything happens to the tyre while it's deflated, understandably, no tyre manufacturer can be expected to honour a warranty claim.

Fit dedicated off-road tyres

Highway-Terrain (H/T) tyres generally offer suitable off-road traction, but the bottom line is that they are not made for heavy-duty off-road work, and unless you fancy repairing



Appropriate deflation guide

Terrain	Deflation percentage
Bitumen	0% (manufacturer's recommendation)
Gravel	10-15%
Corrugated dirt tracks	10-15%
Sharp rocks	10-15%
Smooth rocks	20-50%
Mud	25%
Sand	50-60%

countless punctures (or throwing tyres away because the sidewalls are damaged) it is strongly advised that you fit a dedicated set of A/T or M/T tyres. They offer more traction and longevity, and are puncture resistant.

Deflate for strength

A deflated A/T tyre (such as the Cooper S/T Maxx) can be (up to) 1000% more puncture resistant than an OE fitted H/T tyre!

Small changes, big results

Don't underestimate the impact that a small tyre-pressure change can have, even if it's just 0.2 bar. For example, what may not be possible at 1.0 bar, could be a breeze at 0.8 bar.

Avoid sharp turns

Never perform a sharp turn if your tyres are deflated below 1.2 bar. Doing so will place pressure on the tyre's sidewall and may cause it to de-bead off the rim.

Front and rear

Your 4x4's rear tyres can be deflated slightly more than the front tyres. This is because the rear tyres are not subjected to turns and sidewall pressures.

Going by sight

If you don't have a tyre pressure gauge with you, and you are about to drive over sharp rocks, it's advisable to stop deflating the moment you notice the tyre bulging at the sidewall.

Essential gear

But you should always travel with an accurate tyre-pressure gauge, a heavy-duty compressor and a puncture repair kit in your 4x4. And remember, most gauges – even the digital kind – will be hopelessly inaccurate if you drop them.

Speed kills

No matter what the terrain type, never drive a deflated tyre at high speeds. Doing so will cause excessive heat within the tyre, irreparable damage and ultimately tyre failure.

Gravel travel

A small decrease in tyre pressure will dramatically improve your vehicle's performance on gravel, and road comfort, especially over corrugations. But again, avoid high-speed travel and don't deflate tyres if your vehicle is heavily loaded.

Turning blue

If your deflated tyres take on a blue-ish tone, it means that they are potentially underinflated, and overheating.

Over the top

Always drive OVER sharp obstacles rather than try to squeeze around them. The tread is the strongest part of a tyre, and it can also be repaired when damaged. In contrast, the sidewall is a tyre's weakest and most vulnerable area, and it cannot be repaired. If in doubt, drive over, not around.


Back on the bitumen

The vehicle manufacturer's recommended tyre pressures are generally accurate for on-road use. Look inside your vehicle's fuel flap, door recess, or in the owner's manual for a tyre-pressure chart. Most manufacturers recommend between 2.2 and 2.4 bar.

It's about length, not width

The performance advantage of deflating one's tyres is linked to an increase in tread length – as the tyre deflates – and not tread width. In other words, you want the tyre's tread length to "stretch" out, and not bulge at the sidewall.

Tyre construction

Tyre construction greatly influences how a tyre will react to deflation. Some tyres use a robust rubber compound that requires additional deflation in order to achieve the same "stretched out" result. What's more, a road-biased H/T tyre with a two-ply sidewall rating will require less deflating than an A/T or M/T tyre with a stronger sidewall. 



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COOPERTIRES

4X4 TRAIL

BASS LAKE 4X4 ADVENTURES, HENLEY ON KLIP

A 2WD Suzuki Jimny? If you take the wrong line at the Bass Lake 4x4 trail, things can get rather interesting!

Pretty, but tough!

Situated less than an hour's drive south of Johannesburg at Henley on Klip, the Bass Lake 4x4 Adventures venue is big on air-time for 4x4 wheels.

Text: Danie Botha Photos: Bridgestone SA

Well-known 4x4 personality

Alan Pepper, who runs the Bass Lake 4x4 Adventures experience, has an unusual way of doing things. He also follows his own set of 4x4 (driving) rules.

After two decades of 4x4 tuition and driving, Alan has devised some driving techniques that cause other instructors to

have a mild stroke when they hear about them. But the techniques, whether written in a 4x4 syllabus or not, certainly work. We've experienced that first hand.

Driver training is but one of the attractions at the Bass Lake complex. The scuba diving activity is an obvious attraction, and one that the venue is renowned for. Also on the menu are

conferencing, team building, bachelor parties, mountain biking, archery, hiking, boating, bird watching, photography and bass fishing.

The 4x4 section forms a major part of the business, and Alan runs a fleet of Suzuki Jimnys that clients can rent for their driver training.

Accommodation is available in luxury lodge tents, as well as in entry-level bow tents.



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THE FACTS

- **NAME:** Bass Lake 4x4 Adventures
- **LOCATION:** About 50km south of Johannesburg, in Henley on Klip (Gauteng)
- **GPS:** S26 degrees 30' 28.0" / E28 degrees 03' 49.1"
- **ACCOMMODATION:** Luxury and budget tented camps, with communal ablutions
- **FOOD & BEVERAGE:** Restaurant and bar on site (limited operational hours)
- **DIFFICULTY LEVEL:** Easy (grade 2) to extremely difficult (grade 5)
- **VEHICLE REQUIRED:** 4x4 with low-range and sufficient ground clearance and approach and departure angles. A standard 4x4 bakkie will be able to navigate most of the trail in dry conditions. The most difficult sections are open only to selected visitors "who really know their stuff" and are equipped with capable vehicles.
- **ROUTE DURATION:** The trail is 14km long and will take about three hours to complete. The short, extreme track is only a few hundred metres long, but apparently you can expect to spend plenty of time there!
- **PRICE:** R50 per vehicle for the trail, plus R100 deposit. Accommodation costs are available on request. The tents are available only at certain times of the year.
- **UNIQUE TOUCHES:** The slippery terrain makes for interesting off-roading. Another special touch is Alan's 4x4 driver training method. Although some traditionalists may balk at his handbrake usage ideas and techniques, they certainly work and make any 4x4 driver think out the box. However, if you are a dyed in the wool 4x4 "fundi" who knows all the answers, you probably won't appreciate Alan's methods much.
- **GOOD:** A challenging 4x4 trail that is pretty close to Johannesburg and Pretoria, and has its own accommodation and eatery options.
- **NOT SO GOOD:** The venue may be closing down in a year's time, so if you always wanted to go to Bass Lake, just do it!
- **VERDICT:** This 4x4 trail is challenging and fun, and is ideally situated for a day trip from Gauteng, or a weekend away. If your better half is into diving, your son is a mountain biker and your daughter likes archery, it's a match made in heaven!
- **CONTACT:** Alan Pepper, tel 016 366-1127/8
- **WEBSITE:** www.basslake.co.za



Left: Alan and Karen Pepper, the Bass Lake custodians and hosts for the past 26 years. Right: Another Jimny, another wheel in the air! This one also took a less than ideal line and managed to clock some serious airtime on the way up the climb.



But let's talk 4x4 tracks and trails. The self-drive track is 14km long and takes about three hours to complete if there are no major recoveries to deal with. The trail is based on the topography of the area and includes plenty of ascents, descents and water sections. Some of the obstacles are rated at five, but Alan allows only highly experienced drivers in capable enough 4x4s on these selected tracks.

Not that the mainstream 4x4 trail is a walk in the park. There are several daunting obstacles that cause wheels to lift high in the air. In rainy conditions, some of the obstacles are even tougher, and the venue advises drivers to phone ahead in rainy weather, to make sure the track is open. If it is deemed too dangerous, it is closed down.

In normal (dry) conditions, the most difficult obstacles on the trail are rated at four.

Self-drive 4x4 outings are limited to six vehicles at a time, and good news for drivers who don't necessarily want to tackle all the tough obstacles is that escape routes are

available at all the "oh-my-greatness!" tests.

If you are a newbie to the 4x4 game, you can take the 4x4 training option first. Several training modules are available, but most of the training is done on the tracks and not in a classroom. Alan reckons the best way to learn a 4x4 principle is to experience it on a 4x4 track. And as mentioned before, there is also the option to hire a Suzuki Jimny 4x4.

The fact that the standard Jimnys (no differential lockers and traction aids) are used as the training vehicles on even the big obstacles shows that, with some guidance, even the softer side of the 4x4 brigade can go some way at Bass Lake.

Still, there are obstacles where the drivers of those softer 4x4s are advised to rather watch and learn than "try and cry".

The days of the Bass Lake 4x4 experience may be limited. The mining company that owns the land has decided, after 20 years, may cancel its contract with Alan and his team. So if Bass Lake has always been on your "to do" list, best you get there. **LW**



The Bass Lake complex hosts scuba divers, 4x4 drivers, archers, mountain bikers and even bird watchers. Situated just 40 minutes from Johannesburg, it provides a cool day out for the family. If you travel from far, there are accommodation options available, too.

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Africa in pictures



Greg du Toit is arguably Africa's most respected wildlife photographer, and in 2013 he won the BBC World Wildlife Photographer of the Year competition. He has been taking wildlife photographs for almost two decades. Today, the 38-year-old is also one of the best photographic guides on the continent. Scott Ramsay caught up with him recently to ask a few questions



Simply Maasai. Three men belonging to the Maasai tribe cross the dusty floor of Africa's Great Rift Valley as the sun sets behind the western escarpment.

Greg, which are your top three African wildlife regions?

I think the first one would be Mala Mala. It's the largest part of Sabi Sands Game Reserve, and all its infrastructure was built on less than 10 percent of the land. There's nothing between you and Kruger National Park, except bush and the wildlife. For me, the Lowveld is still the place where my heart is, because that's where I grew up. It's where I first fell in love with the bush.

The second is the Maasai Mara, because it is the wildlife Mecca of the world. So often people tell me you shouldn't go there because there are too many tourists, but it covers 1500 square kilometres, so if you know where to go, when, and how, the wildlife experience is unrivalled.

My third place is Mashatu, in the Tuli Block of Botswana. I like Mashatu simply because there's great wildlife in the area. Also, I've never seen a place in Africa where you've got black sand in the rivers and the gigantic mashatu trees. It's a unique place. I love it, and it's a mere six-hour drive from my home in Johannesburg.

You have had some incredible experiences with wildlife. Tell us about the most memorable.

About ten years ago, I staked out a waterhole in Kenya's South Rift Valley for 16 months. It was a small waterhole, only about 20m wide. It was basically a spring in that dry area, and my mission was to photograph the free-ranging lions.

The life I saw in and around that waterhole was mind-blowing. I dug a hole next to it and put some hessian tacking over the top, and just watched the animals come and go. During the last three months, I actually sat in the water, and I eventually got eye-level photos of the lions drinking.

If you had to leave Africa and had only three weeks left on the continent, which three spots would you visit, and why?

The first would be Satara Camp in Kruger National Park. That's where it all began for me. When I was ten we were there on a

family holiday. I'll never forget leaving. When it was time to go, I was so depressed. I saw the sun rise from within the camp, and I promised myself that I would eventually return and work in the bush.

The second spot is quite different. I would go and camp in the South Rift Valley, just north of Lake Natron. There's a magical site there. It's community-owned, but it's as wild and rugged as Africa gets. What I love about it is that you get to see how man coexists with the wildlife. It's so dramatic. You've got the wall of the Rift Valley, Lake Natron, the swamps, forests, rivers... It's an ancient piece of Africa.

And then the last one: I would go on the iMfolozi Wilderness Trail in Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Game Reserve, KwaZulu-Natal. Actually, I've never done that. The legendary Ian Player was one of my huge role models, and I love Zululand. I've spent a lot of time in Hluhluwe and iMfolozi, but I've never done one of those trails and I'd like to spend a week doing that.

Which are your three favourite wild animals?

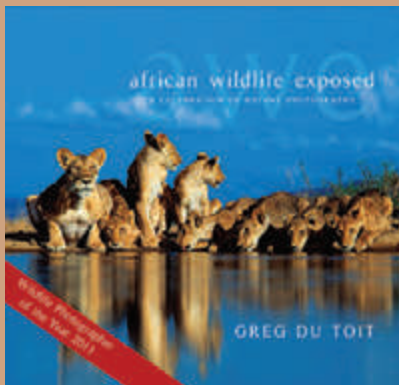
Last breath. An impala is grabbed at the back of the neck by a leopard. The picture captures the surreal calmness of the impala's last moments.



UNDER THE BAOBAB

The first is definitely lions. When I say this, it always surprises people because they think lions just sleep! But I love their primal movement. For me, the roar of a lion is the most spectacular sound in Africa. And I love their playfulness, the way the pride plays with each other, the way a male lion, one minute, can run towards you as if he's about to kill you, and then just flop over. They play both the role of king and jester, and I love that. They are regal and powerful, but they're also stupid and goofy. So, lions are number one.

And then comes the leopard. I love them for their beauty, their independent nature and their superb



stealth. The old adage goes: "You don't see a leopard; the leopard allows you to see it."

Then my third is wild dogs, for their playfulness. Everything is a game for them, even when they are killing their prey. They don't fight with each other. Their teamwork, camaraderie and complete fearlessness are amazing.

What advice would you give aspiring wildlife photographers?

First, you need to discover yourself and recognise what you are passionate about. Then, when you've figured that out, just go out and photograph what you love. Lots of beginners want to do it all, but to be a really good photographer you must be a communicator, and you'll be most effective if you are communicating with something you are passionate about. So it really starts with your own journey of discovery.

Who do you admire most in African conservation?

Ian Player inspired me from the age of 16 because of his dedication, commitment and the utter purpose with which he lived his life. His goal was to try to save the wilderness areas of South Africa.

When I was a boy, he came and spoke at our school. I listened to him talk about how he started the Dusi Marathon, and then Operation Rhino, and the wilderness trails in iMfolozi.

He was an absolute inspiration, so much so that he wrote the foreword to my photography book, *African Awe*. He also signed his biography for me, and I've just finished reading it. Now that he has passed away, it means even more to me.

Second would be Kenneth Newman. I've always been keen on birds, and he had boundless passion for them. He painted portraits of all 900+ species in southern Africa. I admired his experiments with little European warblers, during which he placed some in a planetarium and proved that they migrate by the stars.

Third would be Dr Iain Douglas-Hamilton. I spent time up in Samburu, at his research camp, and I think he's an incredible guy. He must be in his seventies, but he's a maverick. He's a crazy bush pilot and has this spirit of adventure. But he's pragmatic, similar to Ian Player in style.

Iain is a brilliant scientist and animal expert, but he doesn't just write scientific papers – he comes up with real solutions for problems in Africa. For example, his research revealed that elephants hate the sound of storming bees, so he and his team designed beehives



The Thinker. This portrait of a chimpanzee was taken in the Mahale Mountains of Tanzania, home to the largest population of wild chimpanzees.

that villagers can build and place around their villages. These hives are linked with pieces of string, and when elephants come in to raid crops, they bump the hives, causing the bees to swarm.

Does hunting fit into your conservation matrix?

My answer is yes and no. Hunting in general has, up to this point, been very beneficial in that wildlife areas have expanded because of it. But I agree only with certain types of hunting, and I'm vehemently against another type.

So, let me describe an example of the hunting I agree with. In Timbavati Game Reserve they hunt old buffalo bulls. Those old bulls are no longer breeding, so a hunt is set up, and the money gained from it is ploughed back into conservation and managing the reserve. I think that's excellent.

But I'm totally against hunting for territorial animals, especially wild cats. I've seen it in many different parts of Africa, most recently at Mana Pools. There's a national park, and on the boundaries there are hunting areas where people go to hunt cats.

If you shoot one of the cats it creates a vacuum, and that vacuum then pulls in another cat from the conservation area or the park, and that cat gets shot. Eventually the population is decimated, so I'm dead against the hunting of leopards and lions.

But if you are talking about hunting older animals that aren't territorial and that are no longer breeding, then I think hunting is a very pragmatic and wise solution. It can raise a lot of funds for conservation.

I need hardly mention that most people are against hunting, but every morning they get up and eat their breakfast cereal. Now, there's nothing worse than a wheat field, because it's a monoculture. That wheat field has wiped out the natural ecology of the area. Which would you rather have – a wildlife area where hunting is permitted or a wheat field that has no natural ecology whatsoever?

Greg, you clearly have a deep love for the African wilderness. What do you love most about it?

My photography is an expression of my love for the wilderness. The wild, for me, offers a

Owl and gerbil. The bushveld is full of surprises and rounding a corner, we happened upon this white-faced Scops owl with its gerbil prey. The coup de grace was executed through the left eye, resulting in a patch of blood not dissimilar in colour to the owl's own fiery red eyes.



UNDER THE BAOBAB

connection with my creator. It's a place where I really come alive – where I can see clearly and exist at a deeper level. It's mysterious, beautiful, fresh and enchanting.

There's a quote from Ian Player that sums up how I feel: "Wilderness, in whatever way we describe it, becomes a chance for human beings to redeem their humanity. It is a place where we go to contemplate our origins, examine our past, and plan our future. It is manna for the soul and hope for all life."

Finally, name your favourite places to watch the sun rise or set in Africa? With whom would you want to enjoy the moment?

I'd watch the sunrise at Campbell Koppies in Mala Mala, where you've got a view over the Lowveld into Kruger. I'd sit there in the early morning with coffee and a rusk, with my old friend Rowan Ravenhill, because he's a kindred spirit. He loves the bush, like I do.

For sunsets, I'd choose the baobab tree known as Rhodes' baobab, on top of a sandstone koppie in Mashatu Game Reserve in the Tuli Block. And I'd watch the sun go down with my wife, Claire, by my side. **LW**



Scott Ramsay

Scott Ramsay is a photo-journalist focusing on national parks and nature reserves in southern Africa. He is supported by Cape Union Mart as a K-Way ambassador, and also by Ford, Goodyear Wrangler, Safari Centre Cape Town, Hetzner and Tracks4Africa.

For more information, check out www.LoveWildAfrica.com, or www.facebook.com/LoveWildAfrica and @love_wild_africa on Instagram.



K-Way/Cape Union Mart gear review

Stoves – MSR WhisperLite and Kovea Top-Mount Gas

While hiking anywhere in southern Africa, a good, all-weather stove is a critical item. I've been caught out before. When I was hiking in the Mnweni area of the Drakensberg two years ago, I was using a simple stove with a gas canister and a screw-in burner. The problem was, there was no regulator, so I couldn't control the amount of gas pressure. At high altitude and in cold conditions, the stove didn't burn hot at all, and it was inefficient. On a cold morning in the 'Berg, when you're dying for a cup of hot tea or coffee or hot Pro Nutro breakfast, this can definitely ruin your day!

So I got hold of an MSR WhisperLite stove. This is just one stove in a range of MSR high-altitude, cold-weather stoves. They are made in the US and have been tried and tested over decades in the most demanding conditions. They are expensive, but if you regularly hike in the mountains, consider one.

The best thing about the WhisperLite is that it can burn any type of fuel. I used benzene, which I'd heard was the most efficient fuel and burns hottest. But you can also use unleaded fuel, paraffin, methylated spirits or kerosene. So even if you run out of benzene, for instance, you can top up your gas bottle at the local petrol station!

The stove burns hot and efficiently. I used about 800mm of benzene during my six days on the mountain, which was good, because I used my stove a lot to boil water every morning, lunch and dinner. Conditions were cold, and I drank a lot of hot tea and hot chocolate!

The flame burns bright and hot, and once it's started, it's unlikely that a strong wind will blow it out. However, it does come with a lightweight metal reflector and windscreen, which helps a lot in the wind.

One word of caution with the WhisperLite: It can be finicky to get started. Once you have connected the gas line to the stove and the

bottle, you have to pump the gas bottle a little to build pressure, and then slowly allow the liquid gas through into the primer. Then you light this liquid with a match, so that the flame can heat the primer, which turns the liquid into gas as it comes through the stove. Then you turn the regulator attached to the bottle to control the flame size.

You need a little practice, but once you have learnt the tricks, the stove is easy to use.

I've also used a Kovea Scout Top-Mount Hiker stove. It gave no

problems. What's nice is that it has an ignition button to start the flame, so you don't have to use matches (but I'd still take matches just in case). Also, the regulator seemed to control the gas pressure well. However, in windy and cold conditions, it seemed that the Kovea stove didn't burn as efficiently or as hot as the MSR WhisperLite. However, the Kovea stove is much easier to start and use than the WhisperLite.

One word about using gas, and especially benzene. Be careful when handling the flammable substance, because not only is it flammable, but it is extremely toxic. I have spoken to several seasoned hikers and

adventurers about this, and they warned that the cumulative effects of benzene on your hands can precipitate serious health issues – including cancer, apparently. So, if you are using benzene (or any other flammable fuel), don't get it on your hands or face.

Visit www.capeunionmart.co.za for more information on both stoves. The Kovea stove retails for R399, so it's much cheaper than the WhisperLite (R1899), but it doesn't have the same efficiency or reliability. For the MSR WhisperLite, go to Cape Union Mart stores, or contact distributors Outward Ventures to find a retail outlet near you: www.outwardventures.co.za; tel 021 683-3638 or e-mail info@outward.co.za.



Although we're best known for our Arctic Truck conversions, we don't define ourselves by what we do, but rather by what we CAN do. Whether you're looking for a suspension kit, winch, or something totally unique, we'll make your wildest 4x4 dreams come true. But, don't just take our word for it; check out our past work and see for yourself...



THE BERSERKER: 37" Arctic Truck Hilux with supercharger and 295 kW



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MR UNIVERSE: 37" Land Cruiser, juiced up and ready to flex



THE TRAVELLER: 33" Merc ML Overland, built to roam



SPEED FREAK: First-of-its-kind Porsche Cayenne, with 35s and Fox suspension



ALL-ROUNDER: 35" Arctic Truck Hilux, the work-hard, play-harder pick-up



HEAD TURNER: 35" Ford Ranger, fully customised and eager for attention



ROCK SPIDER: 35" Wrangler Rubicon, the creepy-crawly of 4x4s



SMOOTH OPERATOR: 35" Arctic Truck Navara, unrivalled ride comfort



MR SUPERIOR: G-Wagon Professional and 37 inches of arrogance



MR POPULAR: 33" Toyota Fortuner, free of the crowd, and standing tall



THE JUGGERNAUT: 35" Land Cruiser pick-up, the go-anywhere vehicle



RESTORATION BUILD: FJ Cruiser, we'll restore your classic!



GOLDEN OLDIE: 1948 Jeep Willys restoration build



FAST BACK: 33" Hilux with custom roll cage and Lexus V8

To Cahora Bassa and back – again!



The mind plays tricks. You remember the good times, like the evening braai after a long day on the road, and forget about the bad ones, such as the tiresome roadblocks all over Zimbabwe. And so it was that Craig Vetner and his friends headed for Cahora Bassa again – for the second time in four years

Text and photography: Craig Vetner



We were barely back in Kokstad, East Griqualand, from a trip to Cahora Bassa in 2010 when plans were being made for a return visit to our friend, Greg Goddard, who now lives there.

We had travelled in my trusty black 2005 Hilux KZTE DC 4x4 (aptly named "The Mamba") and the Ford supercab belonging to Steve Dutton. We always try to travel together from a safety point of view, and to have help at hand in the event of a breakdown.

Soon forgotten were the endless queues and rip-off at Beit Bridge, the multiple roadblocks in Zimbabwe, the long drive and the costs of fuel. We put the irrational decision down to the water from Kokstad's Crystal Springs. It should clearly not be used to make ice!

Steve, our grey-bearded and balding friend, held us to the decision and one November morning in 2014, I left Port Shepstone for Kokstad to join up with lifelong buddies Roddy Andrea, "the Greek", Denis Barker, "the Menace", Baldy (Steve Dutton) and Dawie Greyling, to begin the long journey. Dawie was actually on a "one-way ticket" to new beginnings on the banks of Cahora Bassa.

Denis was my co-pilot for the trip, and Dawie was travelling with us. Dawie had a couple of boxes of tools and suitcases, and Denis was "travelling light", with two ammo cases and a credit card. We did not take any food. The idea was to live off the land, "just like in *Voetspoort*". We had enough beer, so I was not overly concerned.

The first leg of 962km ended in Potgietersrus, where we filled up with fuel before pushing on to Louis Trichardt. We found a place to stay called Cloud's End. I was dubious at first, but it turned out fine, with air-conditioned rooms and clean bathrooms.

Next was the dreaded Beit Bridge. As a precaution I had traced the e-mail address of the Zimbabwe Tourism Authority and arranged for someone to help us make a trouble-free crossing (lindarosentuli@gmail.com). We arrived at the South African side at 08h00, and it was a walk in the park. Then we had to find our assigned

Zimbabwe contact man, Lawrence, by cellphone. Our worries about Africa time were groundless. The call was promptly answered and Lawrence was waiting across the bridge, as arranged a month before.

On the Zimbabwean side we entered into the dingy halls of officialdom and the glaring eyes of Uncle Bob hanging on the walls. But Lawrence had been there before and things were going quite smoothly until one heavily shoulder-lapelled lady decided she was not going to be out-manoeuvred of her "cut". She started ranting at Lawrence, wanting to know where we were going. Apparently "Harare" was not sufficient. We came up with the suburb, but this was also not good enough.

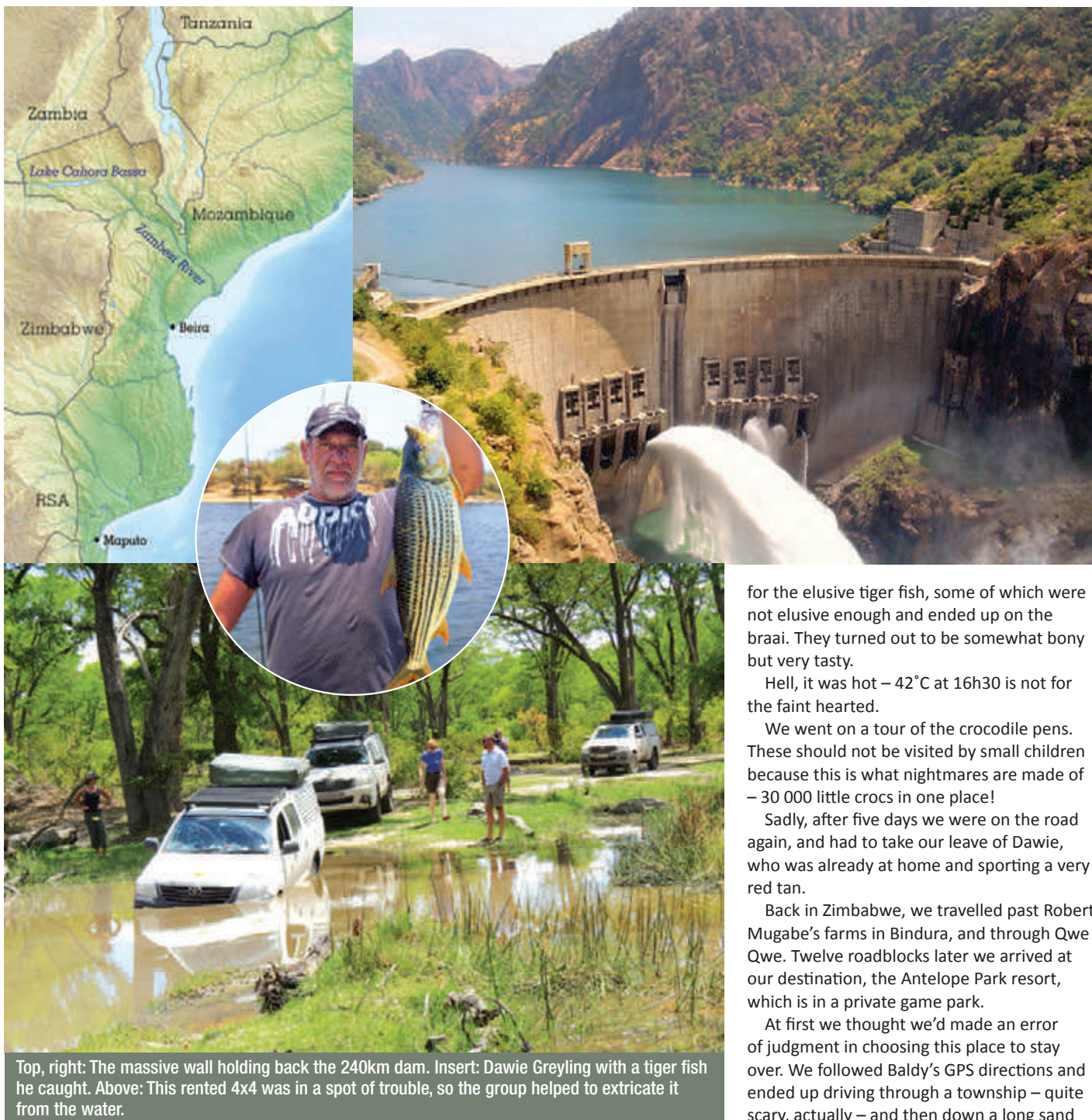
We were starting to feel like that rabbit in the headlights, but luckily the counter next to our tormentor became vacant and we were helped by a man who we thought was going to be OK. Unfortunately, he was also the "efficient" type and we were taken outside for a physical inspection of the vehicles. Then it was back inside, where the official disappeared, leaving us at the counter.

On his eventual return, a tediously slow writing of registers and typing on the computer followed. Eventually we made it through in one-and-three-quarter hours – not bad, considering...

Within 15 minutes of leaving the border we encountered the first of seven roadblocks on the way to Harare. And yes, there was also one speeding fine of US\$10. If they had caught me 3km earlier I would still be part of the Blue Lantern Inn establishment.

We did not stop for the well-known guy in the wheelchair, as he had reinforcements – two of them. The wheelchair has a long aerial, and the man holds his own roadblock. He was also there in 2010. Man, can he move! He's as agile as a cat if he sees you are not going to stop. How the big trucks haven't run him over is beyond me.

When we got to Harare we went in search of our hosts. We had been given the name of a friend's brother, who was asked by his brother



Top, right: The massive wall holding back the 240km dam. Insert: Dawie Greyling with a tiger fish he caught. Above: This rented 4x4 was in a spot of trouble, so the group helped to extricate it from the water.

in Kokstad, whom he had not seen in 13 years, to accommodate his friends who were passing through. To meet such hospitable and friendly folk is rare nowadays. Thank you, Bill and Jenny Mannix, for opening your home to strangers!

On 9 November, another seven roadblocks later, we arrived at the Mucumburu border post, a quiet spot which is open only in the dry season, when the river between Zimbabwe and Mozambique is not flowing – a stretch of about 200m. We finally reached the home of Greg and Gwen Goddard on the water's edge,

at Cahora Bassa in the evening.

The Cahora Bassa dam and hydro-electric facility on the Zambezi River is in western Mozambique, 125km north-west of Tete. The dam wall is 171m high and 303m wide at the crest. It has a volume of 510-million cubic metres.

The broader Lake Cahora Bassa is 240km long and 31km wide at its widest point, extending to the Zimbabwe border.

We were spoiled as only Greg and Gwen know how! We fished to our hearts' content

for the elusive tiger fish, some of which were not elusive enough and ended up on the braai. They turned out to be somewhat bony but very tasty.

Hell, it was hot – 42°C at 16h30 is not for the faint hearted.

We went on a tour of the crocodile pens. These should not be visited by small children because this is what nightmares are made of – 30 000 little crocs in one place!

Sadly, after five days we were on the road again, and had to take our leave of Dawie, who was already at home and sporting a very red tan.

Back in Zimbabwe, we travelled past Robert Mugabe's farms in Bindura, and through Qwe Qwe. Twelve roadblocks later we arrived at our destination, the Antelope Park resort, which is in a private game park.

At first we thought we'd made an error of judgment in choosing this place to stay over. We followed Baldy's GPS directions and ended up driving through a township – quite scary, actually – and then down a long sand road. Ironically, we felt a little safer when we saw a fence and warning signs not to approach as there were lions roaming freely.

On arrival we were greeted by friendly reception staff and a very neat and well managed resort with a good restaurant and clean accommodation. We thoroughly enjoyed our stay, and recommend Antelope Park highly. Unfortunately we were pressed for time and did not make use of all the facilities on offer. I did promise myself that I would fly back with the missus one day. The mosquitoes were a nuisance, though, so if you pass this way, be prepared.

On our departure we discovered that the correct route was a mere stone's throw from a landing strip and tar road. That GPS had indicated the wrong road on our way in.

We headed for the Victoria Falls, and eight roadblocks later we were just about to drive away when we were stopped again and fined \$10 for not having a continuous red stripe across the back bumper.

Now I ask you – 34 roadblocks by now, manned by between four and six policemen at a time, and only this one enforces a “law” about having a continuous red line on the rear bumper? I suppose we were lucky we weren't fined at each road block. That would certainly have ruined our fuel budget, at a rand/dollar exchange rate of about 12:1.

Another four roadblocks later, and a cop asks if we are carrying guns. Four white guys in Zimbabwe? And they also checked the lights.

We arrived at Victoria Falls in the early afternoon, in the middle of a massive thunderstorm. We camped in the municipal campsite which was very neat, clean and tidy. This is the most popular place to stay for travellers. We encountered those red German touring buses there, and independent tour operators were also using the site.

Later, Roddy showed his culinary skills and prepared a Greek salad for the braai. The excellent meal, along with a cold beer or two, soon restored our good humour.

Next day – it was already 16 November – we walked down to the famous falls. “Impressive” comes to mind, but what an under-statement! It's such a pity that the persistent curio sellers, who don't take no for an answer, can spoil the otherwise pleasant walk from town to the falls.

Next, it was off to



Top: There is no shortage of crocodiles in this area, so swimming is a bad idea!
Centre: A lion lounging in the sun.
Right: The municipal campsite near Victoria Falls. Left: Denis Barker, left, and Steve Dutton relax after a long day on the road.
Insert: Preparing a tasty Greek salad.





Above: A rather dry Victoria Falls. Left: Crossing the new bridge at Khwai. Above, right: White-water rafting is a popular activity in the Khwai



Above: The old Khwai Bridge was in a sorry state. Left: There was a lot of water around Third Bridge, so the group had to walk some sections to ensure they could be driven safely.

Botswana. At the Kazangula border post we were treated to a new experience – the meat and veggie checks. The female official at the gate got into the back of the vehicle with the fridges and checked for bounty, but as we were living off the land, she had a “weigh less” day.

The Kasane shops and liquor store stocked us up for the next leg of our journey. We doubled back to Senyanti and were fortunate to get the last site at the camp. The bar overlooking the watering hole was festive but the game was not so thirsty. We saw one jackal and a few antelope.

We did the Chobe River self-drive, again with disappointing viewing, perhaps because it was mid-morning. We were heading to Linyanti for the night, and on arrival were told that lions had been in the camp the night before. Some German tourists had to be rescued as they screamed until they were collected by the warden and taken to sleep in his office.

Well, this put a whole new perspective on things, especially as the site in question was the one next to ours – 25m away. During dinner preparations, Baldy suddenly went quiet. “Guys,” he said, “there’s an elephant here”. And so there was – the mother of all elephants, walking past about 10m away. It ripped a couple of branches down and disappeared into the night.

We slept rather lightly. Those of us in the roof-top tents felt safe because Denis was relegated to a ground tent between the vehicles, and we figured that the lions would chomp him first!

On November 18 we arrived at Khwai to find elephants all over the road, and turned down a small track, only to be confronted by a watering hole occupied by hippos and more elephants. What a photographic experience! Baldy was at his happiest, changing lenses, leopard crawling in the bush and snapping away.

We arrived at the campsite to a reception of baboons. Aggressive and spoilt, they tried to get into the back of the vehicles but finally dispersed, and we could set up camp. During the night we were awakened by an intruder in the camp – a hippo, nearly on top of Denis. I think the hippo thought it was among other hippos, what with the snoring coming from the tent on the ground.



This campsite was not impressive, with only cold, slimy water in the showers.

We started out for Third Bridge, following the directions of Baldy's new yellow GPS on the Ford's dashboard, but after two hours on a bush track we decided that this expensive contraption was confused. We consulted the maps and realised we had to turn back and try again. Eventually we found the correct route and ran into German tourist brigades in rental bakkies. Some of them were lost and asked if they could follow us, as by now we were looking like seasoned bush travellers. We didn't let on that we were also "flying blind"!

We even assisted at a river crossing gone wrong when a vehicle got stuck. My expert friends didn't take long to show their skills and resourcefulness, making the rescue look like a practice session.

It was around this point that I nearly ruined a friendship when I called Baldy on the radio and offered him R200 for his recently acquired yellow dash decoration. This did not go down well as we were navigating on my antiquated Garmin, with no additional maps installed and a continuously charging battery. This model was still pre-New South Africa.

No more was discussed on this issue until the evening braai, when it was decided that the new GPS yellow dash was adjusted to the northern hemisphere, with everything being opposite in the southern hemisphere, left being right and south being north etc etc. (The theory did make sense at the time!)

Third Bridge impressed me, new ablutions and all.

We had an interesting stop in Maun to visit Roddy's nephew, Andreas, who is a bush pilot. It had slipped my mind that he had grown up over the years and was now in his late twenties or early thirties. But one thing was for sure – apart from being an expert pilot, he makes a fine salad.

We flew to Xudum resort, somewhere in the Okavango. It took an hour in what appeared to be a shaky little plane, with a young lady pilot. I must have looked nervous, but she knew her game and we arrived safely.

This place I can recommend – good food, good accommodation, good service, and really professional staff. The game drives



Top: An aerial view of the Okavango. Above, left: The lounge area Xudum. Above, right: Xudum has a lovely pool for those sweltering days. Left: There is nothing better than a relaxing bath after a long day.

were excellent, putting us in the middle of the lions, and we saw an attempted kill. The lions looked like a bunch of youngsters, as none had real manes. Watching them split up and surround the targeted letchwe was surreal. One lion would crouch in the grass and the others would try to herd the letchwe towards him. It was all so natural. The tactic of "divide and conquer" is born into their veins.

I felt the guide ruined the attempted ambush as he drove into the middle of it.


The lions ignored the vehicles and walked between them without even glancing at the "meals on wheels". But on one occasion a young male returned my stare. It was recognition on a different level – a man thing. Thankfully I must have looked like a Greek salad and the lion did not show any interest in tasting me.

We noticed that one lion had a collar around its neck. We later spoke to a person at the

camp who told us that 11 lions were part of an ongoing study. This is when I realised that the guides knew all along where the lions were, and we were just being entertained with a bumpy and dusty ride for the best part of the day.

On our return to Maun we were introduced to the local hospitality, and rugby on the big screen. The funny thing was that a lot of people were not shouting for the Boks. Many were overseas visitors and supported the opposition. The situation called for Maun ice which, funnily enough, had the same side effects as the Crystal Springs ice back home. It was our group's unanimous view that ice definitely causes severe headaches and irrational decisions and is bad for one's pocket and health.

Finally, on November 24, it was time to head back to SA. We slept over at Bela Bela and got home safely the next day. We had travelled 6222km at an approximate cost of R16 000 per vehicle, everything included.

What a pity that my application for sponsorship was ignored by a popular motor manufacturer. I was even prepared to let them brand my vehicle. You snooze, you lose! 

Taste adventure



Leisure Wheels 4x4 Safaris will offer shorter safaris to its readers in 2015. We are busy developing some interesting itineraries on the Wild Coast, the mountains in the Eastern Cape, the West Coast and other exiting destinations within South Africa.

NAMIBIA

Lüderitz to Walvis Bay

2015: 15 – 21 Aug, 2 – 8 Oct, 7 – 13 Nov, 16 – 22 Dec

Places visited on the way include Silvia Hill, Meob Bay, Conception Bay and Sandwich Bay. Desert wildlife, spectacular scenery, untouched beaches, abandoned mining settlements, miles of sand driving and shipwrecks are some of the attractions along the way.

▶▶ R8 250pp.

Faces of the Namib – Sand Sea

2015: 24 – 29 May, 02 – 07 Oct, 30 Aug – 4 Sep

Exploring the central Namib – discover an untamed wilderness with beauty as unique and diverse as only the Namib can offer.

▶▶ R8 500pp.

PONDOLAND

Wildcoast

2015: 23 – 30 October

Pondoland, on the Transkei Wild Coast, is one of the destinations that so many people would like to visit, but know so little about, and do not want to go there on their own. Pondoland, is a land of wild cattle and wilder beauty, of waterfalls plunging directly into the Indian Ocean, of colonies of vultures nesting above undisturbed forest gorges, and a beautiful but rugged coastline which boasts some of the most spectacular scenery in Southern Africa.

▶▶ R 5 400 pp (subject to change)

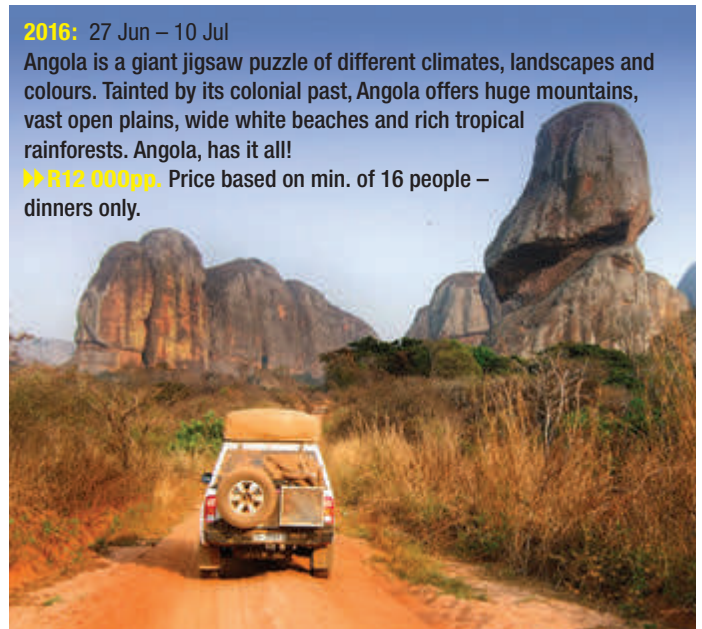


ANGOLA

2016: 27 Jun – 10 Jul

Angola is a giant jigsaw puzzle of different climates, landscapes and colours. Tainted by its colonial past, Angola offers huge mountains, vast open plains, wide white beaches and rich tropical rainforests. Angola, has it all!

▶▶ R12 000pp. Price based on min. of 16 people – dinners only.



ZAMBIA

Zambia with Zest

2015: 22 Augustus – 11 September **2016:** 29 August – 18 September

Zambia is one of the undiscovered gems of Africa and this safari will take you to its hidden places. They include South Luangwa, Luambe, North Luangwa, Kapishya Hot Springs, and the North and South of Kafue. And, of course, there is also a visit to a world-famous natural wonder – the Victoria Falls.

▶▶ R15 800pp (subject to change).

AFRICA COMBO

Big Five to Big Blue

2015: 9 Oct – 27 Oct 18. **2016:** 18 April – 5 May

The diversity of this safari through five African countries is special. The itinerary takes in the world-renowned Big Five game reserves, Chobe in Botswana and South Luangwa in Zambia. You will also visit the breathtaking Lake Malawi, the Cahora Bassa Dam and the Eastern Highlands of Zimbabwe.

R10 200 pp (subject to change).

ZAMBIA



Liuwa Plains

2015: 8 – 20 November **2016:** 7 November – 19 November

This safari is a combination of the wildebeest migration in Liuwa Plains and the migration of the “Flying Foxes” or straw coloured fruit bats in Kasanka National Park. Few people have ventured into the Liuwa Plain due to its relative inaccessibility. However the prolific birdlife, the wildebeest migration and the story of Lady Liuwa, the “last lioness”, makes it one of Africa’s last true wildernesses and a huge attraction to the bush fundi. During this time of year five million straw-coloured fruit bats also take up residence in one hectare of Kasanka National Park’s Mushitu swamp forest. This is a spectacle not to be missed and one of Africa’s greatest wildlife spectacles, if not the world’s.

►► **R9 900 pp** (subject to change)

ZIMBABWE

Cross-country expedition

2016: 20 May – 2 June, 27 June – 10 July

This safari allows you to experience all facets of Zimbabwe – from camping on the banks of the Zambezi to the luxury chalets at Troutbeck Inn in the Eastern Highlands.

The itinerary includes the Matopos, Hwange National Park, a ferry crossing on Lake Kariba, the Mana Pools, Harare, Nyanga National Park in the Eastern Highlands and the Great Zimbabwe Ruins.

►► **R15 100pp** (subject to change).

REPUBLIC OF CONGO

2016: August/September. (3 weeks – final dates to be confirmed). Visiting the modern day ‘Dorsland Trekkers’ at Dolisie in the Republic of Congo. This promises to be unforgettable adventure via Angola, DRC (just crossing the western part), towards Cabinda and exploring the Republic of Congo? There are various exciting destinations with very little organised ‘self-drive tourism’. Go in search of the western mountain Gorillas.

►► **Price on application.**

►► For more information on any of these tours or to book your trip, contact Avril Muller well in advance on 021 530 3186 or avril@ramsaysmedia.co.za

TANZANIA



Wildebeest Migration

2016: 14 July – 12 August

This safari offers a once-in-a lifetime experience – the beginning of the annual wildebeest migration in the Serengeti, also called the “Birth of Life”. There is also a visit to Lake Malawi and the Ngorongoro Crater. The journey leads us through Mozambique, Malawi, Tanzania, Zambia and Botswana.

►► **R6000 per person** (Guide fee only and subject to change)

ZAMBIA

Tanganyika Waterfall Route

2016: 10 June – 30 June

We believe in innovation and always want to offer something new and exciting, and Zambia also never fails to surprise. This safari takes you to the most spectacular waterfalls Zambia can offer. From the impressive Lumangwe falls to the smaller, but equally beautiful Chisimba – and Mutumuna falls, the route also includes the world’s longest freshwater, the second largest and second deepest lake, Lake Tanganyika.

►► **R11 700per person**



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New Pajero Sport breaks cover

The all-new Mitsubishi Pajero Sport has made its international debut. The design is a massive step up from the current generation and the underpinnings are unlikely to disappoint, as the new Pajero Sport is based on the all-new Triton.

The interior is carried over from the Triton as well, and so is the 2,4-litre turbocharged diesel engine.

Mitsubishi hasn't revealed power output yet, but in the Triton this engine delivers between 113kW/380Nm and 133kW/430Nm.

An all-new eight-speed automatic gearbox, developed specifically for the Pajero Sport, will be available in certain models.

The vehicle should go on sale in SA next year.



Kia Sedona makes SA debut



Kia's all-new large MPV, known as the Grand Sedona, is now available in SA. Its strong points are practicality and versatility, and customers can choose between seven- and 11-seat configurations.

The 11-seat arrangement has two independent front seats and three rows of three seats behind them. The second and third rows can slide, so leg-room can be adjusted as required. The third row seats can be flipped forward to extend cargo space.

In seven-seat models, the cargo area grows by 77 litres to 960 litres with the back seats flattened. This grows to 2 220 litres behind the second row and 4 022 litres when all rear seats are stowed.

Despite the lower roof line, the shape of the tailgate accommodates greater load height in the cargo bay.

Engine options are a 3,3-litre V6 petrol powertrain or a 2,2-litre turbodiesel. Both are mated to a six-speed automatic transmission.

All models have a 5-year/150 000km warranty, a 5-year/100 000km maintenance plan and three years of unlimited roadside assistance.

Prices

Grand Sedona 2.2 CRDi EX 7-seat R499 995

Grand Sedona 2.2 CRDi EX 11-seat R515 995

Grand Sedona 2.2 CRDi SX 7-seat R625 995

Grand Sedona 2.2 CRDi SXL 7-seat R669 995

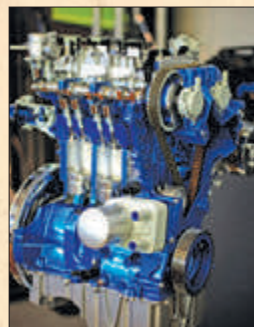
Grand Sedona 3.3 V6 SX 7-seat R605 995

New Fortuner finally revealed

The all-new 2016 Toyota Fortuner has made its much-anticipated global debut. According to Calvyn Hamman, senior vice-president, sales and marketing, for Toyota SA Motors, the brief for the new model was simple: "Design a Fortuner that can compete in terms of style and aesthetics while staying true to its authentic SUV characteristics and genuine 4WD performance." Newly developed 2.4-litre and 2.8-litre diesels are highlights of the new engine range, supplementing the petrol variants. Details are not yet available. The all-new Fortuner is expected in SA during the second quarter of 2016. Full local range and specifications will be disclosed closer to the launch.



More honours for EcoBoost



Ford's tiny EcoBoost petrol engine has received an eighth award in four years at the 2015 International Engine of the Year Awards. For the fourth consecutive year, the Ford 1.0-litre EcoBoost was named "Best Engine Under 1.0-litre." It was judged the class winner based on drivability, performance, economy, refinement and technology by a panel of 87 motoring journalists from 35 countries.

Last year, the EcoBoost became the first engine to be named overall International Engine of the Year three times in a row, and in 2012 was named "Best New Engine".

"The 1.0-litre EcoBoost engine changed the game for small petrol engines and we're proud it remains best in class," said Joe Bakaj, vice president, product development, Ford of Europe.

New Tonneau King products

Tonneau King has introduced some new products for 2015.

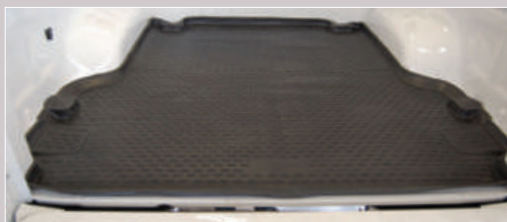
The space cage is the perfect solution for those who want to increase their bakkie's load capacity and keep things from rolling around in the load bin.

To keep valuable cargo safe, it has also introduced the hard tri-fold tonneau cover. This can be fitted without drilling holes into the bodywork. Materials used include top-grade aluminium, galvanised steel, high-density foam and Nylon 6. This is a top quality product that can manage heavy loads.

The new King soft cover is the first lockable soft cover in SA. Again, no drilling is required for fitting, and it can be removed and stowed away within seconds. Tonneau King claims that this particular cover can save a customer up to 10% on each tank of fuel.

The final new product is a load bin liner, which the company describes as extremely flexible, robust and durable. It is lighter and stronger than rubber, and can be easily removed if necessary.

For more information, go to www.tonneauking.co.za.



An engine that makes espresso

Designer-engineer Paolo Mastrogioseppe has, for the past three years, been marketing his hand-crafted dream creations in the form of the world's most exotic racing engines functioning as espresso makers.

Now he has launched his latest designs which, like his half-scale F1 coffee machines, are conceived as functional artwork devices for "the man or woman who appreciates unique design and uncompromised quality."

His new creation, the Aviatore Veloce, has been launched in the form of a quarter-scale military jet engine, with exquisite craftsmanship and detailing, as well as great practicality for the tasks of making coffee, tea, or simply boiling water.

"The Espresso Veloce and Aviatore Veloce were designed at the



same time," says Mastrogioseppe. "I started with a V12 Formula One Grand Prix engine and a prototype military jet engine."

The Aviatore Veloce sells from R165 000 to R270 000, while the Espresso Veloce engine coffee ma-

chines sells for between R85 000 and R225 000, depending on the client's specifications and personalisation.

The Aviatore Veloce can be ordered at www.espressoveloce.com or by contacting Paolo on 083 742 6725.

LA Sport's warranty

LA Sport says that its LAS Profender suspension range is covered by "the best warranty available on a full suspension in Africa". This aftermarket suspension system comes with a three-year/unlimited kilometre warranty.

A set of four LAS Profender shocks costs from R6200, while a full suspension kit

costs from R11500, excluding fitment. For more information on LA Sport products, visit www.lasport.co.za.



Make your car look new

Meguiar's Car Care Products has introduced two products that will have your car looking as good as the day it was driven off the showroom floor.

Paint Protect is an easy to apply synthetic wipe on, wipe off protection product "that lasts 365 days". The formula sets in about five minutes and is fully cured in 24 hours.

The Clarity Headlight Restoration Kit restores yellowed and oxidised glass. It is applied via an aerosol container and prevents re-oxidation for up to a year.

For more information, visit www.meguiars.co.za.



Detect metal like a pro

Minelab, a company that provides metal detecting technology for the average consumer, has released its latest product series.

The Go-Find series is a collection of three new metal detectors designed with beginners in mind. Metal detecting is a growing hobby in SA and Minelab has developed the Go-Find for users of any experience level.

The range consists of the 20, 40 and 60 models. The 40 and 60 models can be mated to a smartphone via Bluetooth, which allows the user to make use of the Go-Find app.

Help fight against poachers

Alu-Cab has teamed up with an organisation called Stop Rhino Poaching in the hopes of saving the remaining rhinos in SA. The company is calling for donations of basic camping equipment, in good working condition, to help those combating the poaching scourge. The list of items needed includes canvas tents, ground sheets, gas bottles, cookers, lights, sleeping bags, blankets, water bottles, eating utensils, multi-tools, torches and old cellphones or smartphones. For more information on the project, e-mail Michahn at marketing@alu-cab.co.za.

Jag's F-Pace tested to the absolute limit

Jaguar's first crossover, the F-Pace, is due to go on sale in SA next year. It has been exhaustively tested in the most demanding locations, both hot and cold, surviving temperatures as low as -40°C and as high as 50°C. Jaguar

claims that its "performance crossover" will offer an unrivalled blend of performance, design and practicality. "We developed the F-Pace to offer the ride, handling and refinement demanded from a Jaguar, together with excep-

tional ability and composure on all surfaces and in all weathers," said Andrew Whyman, the F-Pace project director. The vehicle will be revealed for the first time at the Frankfurt Motor Show in September.



Warn introduces new winch and E-Stop

Warn has introduced the IP68-rated waterproof Zeon Platinum, which it says is "the toughest, most technologically advanced truck and SUV winch available".

A smart, wireless hand-held remote provides control of the winch and clutch, eliminating the winch's manually operated clutch lever and putting the clutch fully in the control of the operator.

"This improves both safety and functionality, because the user does not need to go back to the vehicle to manually engage the clutch," says Leonard Chester, product manager of Warn for southern Africa. "It will also not disengage under load. When returning to the 'home' menu on the remote, the clutch automatically engages, making it one of the safest winches available."

The Zeon 10 Platinum and Zeon 12 Platinum models deliver 10 000lb and 12 000lb (4536kg

and 5440kg) capacities and are supplied with aircraft grade steel rope and a roller fair lead.

The Zeon 10-S Platinum includes the Warn Spydura synthetic rope and a polished aluminium hawse fair lead.

ZEON Platinum comes with a limited lifetime warranty on mechanical parts and a one-year warranty on electrical components.

Warn has also introduced the snap-on emergency stop for winches known as the E-Stop. The emergency stop is a manu-

ally operated snap-action mechanism that will cease winch and hoists operation immediately in an emergency.

The E-Stop has an IP66 rating with a lifespan of 10 000 mechanical operations and is suitable for high Amp DC applications with 12V and 24V output. The maximum contact voltage output is 48V direct current.

It retails for R1400, excluding VAT, and is available from leading outdoor retail outlets including Safari Centre and B'rakha.



GoPro camera is smaller, lighter

GoPro has introduced its smallest, lightest and most convenient camera yet, dubbed the Hero4 Session.

The Session is 50% smaller and 40% lighter than the Hero4 Black and Silver models, while still retaining the image and video quality these cameras are known for.

GoPro has also introduced a new range of accessories to help customers capture video "no matter what activity they take part in".

The Hero4 Session retails at R6499 and is available at leading retail stores countrywide.

Xaudum campsite gets a face-lift

The Xaudum campsite in the Khaudum National Park, Namibia, has been renovated and is open for business.

There are now six sites situated under camelthorn trees. Each site has a braai area, wooden structured private ablutions and a shaded seating area.

Guests are now required to book their units in advance. Management is working on an online reservation system. Meanwhile, reservations can be made by e-mailing reservations@nes.com.na.

The camp is reached from the south along the D3315 via Tsumkwe or from Katere along the Trans-Caprivi Highway (B8) in the north.



Continental expands in Mozambique

Continental, one of the world's leading tyre manufacturers and automotive suppliers, is expanding its retail operations in Mozambique. Continental currently distributes passenger and commercial vehicle tyres into Mozambique and will officially relaunch the brand at the Mozambique Standard Bank Motor Show through one of its partners, MotorCare Lda. "Through its partnership with MotorCare Lda, Continental is set to expand its product portfolio and increase its profile in the Mozambican market," says Richard Nijhout, executive vice president of MotorCare Lda and chief operating office of the Kjaer Group. Maputo-based Motorcare Lda, Mozambique's leading vehicle distributor, is part of the Kjaer Group and has branches in Inhambane, Beira, Nampula, Pemba, Tete and Moatize.



CAMPSITE REVIEW
with
Gary Swemmer

DOORNDRAAI

Picture perfect

Doorndraai is proof that you should never believe everything you read on the internet. While searching for information on Doorndraai, Gary Swemmer came across a forum thread saying this private game farm lacked accommodation options and that the ablution facilities at the camp were “very basic”. Well, having been there, he can report that this is not the case!

Doorndraai, opened 15 years ago, is a well-established lodge, and the sort of place that feels as though it’s been in the accommodation business for some time. They have earned their stripes, oiled the machine, and know exactly what people want from a weekend getaway.

Yet, on the surface, the lodge, campsite, chalets and general facilities look brand new – as if a coat of paint had been applied just before you arrived. The impressive thing is that it has looked this way for as long as I’ve been going there, which is a good few years – always neat and impeccably clean.

Situated a two hours’ drive from Pretoria,



Doorndraai’s braai areas are generously-sized and offer protection from the occasional icy-cold wind. With more than 1600ha at your disposal, there’s more than enough room to explore.



Doorndraai covers roughly 1600ha of privately-owned land in the Waterberg region – tree-filled bushveld that’s stocked with game and hosts 300 to 400 bird species.

The lodge is rated as four-star, and lives up to this claim. The campsite (more aptly called a caravan park), boasts ten caravan stands, all with electricity, tree-cast shade, privacy screens (or wind breakers) and generously-

sized braai areas.

The campsite floor consists of brick-paved caravan stands as well as fine-stone gravel that is constantly raked and kept free of leaves.

Oh, and the ablution facilities are pristine. In fact, just one word sums up Doorndraai’s accommodation offering: immaculate.

Activities include a game drive, fishing in the farm dam, bird-watching (there’s a hide at the dam), exploring an easy-going 4x4 trail, mountain biking (lots of tracks available), hiking (with wildlife), hunting, rafting, and an educational course on the identification of indigenous trees.

If you haven’t yet visited this well-equipped, well-run and well-priced luxury lodge and campsite, book your next weekend away now! You won’t be disappointed. **LW**



Ablutions

Condition: Fully equipped and clean

Toilets: Flush toilets

Showers: Yes

Hot water: Yes

Facilities

Electricity: Yes

Space for trailers and caravans: Yes

Braai: Yes, concrete platforms

Swimming: Yes, several splash pools and a large farm dam

Cellphone signal: Yes

Drinking water: Yes.

4X4 Trails

There is a circular route that’s softroader-friendly and free for guests staying on the farm. The trail is more of a scenic game drive than a challenging 4x4 track.

Safety & Security

The farm is well-fenced and generally busy with guests.

Price

There is a variety of accommodation on offer, from camping in the caravan park to staying in a chalet. Go to

www.doorndraailodge.co.za for more information. Prices range from R380 per campsite to R480 per person for a luxury cabin.

Contact

Call 071 993-6190, or email info@doorndraailodge.co.za to make a booking. Go to www.doorndraailodge.co.za for more information.

Directions

Take the R516 from Warmbaths and head towards Thabazimbi. Travel

along this road for roughly 60km until you get to the Rooiberg turn-off. Drive 26km to Rooiberg, head through the town and exit onto a gravel road. After 6km, you’ll see a signpost for Doorndraai on your left.

Gps coordinates (Wild Camp)

S24° 20.205 E28° 42.688



ROAD SAFETY
With Ashref Ismail

SAFETY TALK

Who said road safety wasn't exciting?

Death, mayhem, corruption, intimidation, boycotts, road blockades...
Who said road safety in South Africa was boring?

After spending two

decades in government road safety, I decided to call it a day in December last year and start my own consultancy business to assist with fleet management. In between, I decided to produce a road safety magazine. But the general consensus among those in the know was that it would not succeed. Road safety is not sexy, glamorous or worthy of holding people's interest, I was told.

There are more than 700 magazine titles in SA covering some of the most obscure topics you can imagine. So why would a road safety publication not work, given that it is such a major challenge in the country?

But I decided to guard against my naïveté and go with the better wisdom of those in the know, so I shelved the idea... for a while.

The stark reality is that an average of 40 people are killed

on our roads every day. These victims are mostly quite young (19-29) and female, often students or those working in lower paid jobs, such as cleaning, retail and or waitressing. Most of them were passengers in buses or minibus taxis, or pedestrians.

The sad reality is that many of the victims are single parents or the sole breadwinners in a family, often with many dependants. When such a person is killed, a lot of people are directly affected.

If you have travelled abroad, you would probably have noticed that South Africans tend to be far friendlier than the people you meet in other countries, especially where there is limited sunshine! So what is it that makes us so angry, impatient and inconsiderate when we get behind the wheel of a car? It's as though we don our warrior masks every time, to do battle with

other motorists.

Why do we behave so badly on the roads? Why can't we display the same charm and "ubuntu" that we do in our work or social interactions?

Don't think that bad driving and ugly road manners are the exclusive domain of the usual culprits, the minibus taxi drivers. According to many uniformed officers, the number of female professionals who give the rules of the road the proverbial finger is increasing.

So what is the solution to this gauntlet we have to run daily? Respect, I believe – respect for all the rules and regulations, respect for other road users, the authorities, your vehicle and, most of all, respect for yourself.



Everyone has access to social media nowadays, and the last thing you want going viral is a video clip of yourself wielding a baseball bat at the 85-year-old granny who accidentally cut you off in her Ford Escort! **LW**

Ashref Ismail is a road safety practitioner turned activist and can be contacted on ash@fmxafrica.co.za

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NEVER SAY DIE

Some vehicles do not die

In Georgia, you only need to get a roadworthy certificate and vehicle licence once, and then you can keep the car for as long as you like. This inevitably leads to a large number of interesting vehicles staying on the roads, and some weird engineering solutions

I am so glad that we don't have vehicle laws like those in Georgia. Over there, you buy a vehicle and get a roadworthy certificate, after which you register and pay the fees. From then on you never again have to pay licence fees and you can keep your vehicle on the roads for as long as you like. The traffic cops dare not trouble the owners, because this would lead to a national strike.

On our recent visit to Georgia we came across many old ex-military Russian trucks. They did not look road worthy, but we saw many of them on the streets every single day.

These trucks are small and look so cute that everybody in our group tried to find a way of buying one and bringing it back to SA as a restoration project.

You do get the odd one that is restored beautifully, but most of them are very dilapidated and can barely keep going, but their owners don't care as long as the thing can get them around. In any case, the traffic cops don't care about them, either.

We waited for one truck to stop at the local bar and proceeded to ask the owner about it. He then showed us his pride and joy, which was his only vehicle and everyday mode of transport.

Incredibly, there were no

caps for the fuel tank, radiator or oil, but he explained that the fuel tank had been completely rusted through, so he'd had to make another plan. In such a predicament, owners carry a 20-litre can of petrol on the back and fit a two-litre plastic bottle under the bonnet, from which a suction pipe runs to the carburettor. When the bottle runs empty, they fill it from the can at the back. At the same time, they fill the radiator with water so they can drive for as long as the two litres of fuel last!

The tyres on this vehicle were

completely smooth and only one headlight worked. No other exterior light was working. The body was rusted, but not in bad shape at all. We could see that the vehicle was built with proper, thick steel.

We tried the steering and it took half a turn before the front wheels responded, but the owner explained that he did not drive faster than 60km/h, and for that speed the steering was within specifications!

The interior was old with no working gauges. The seats were decorated with old clothes to stop

the springs from sticking into the occupant's bottom.

We could see that one door had been damaged at some stage, because it was red and the rest of the vehicle was green.

We couldn't believe it, but when the driver got in and turned the key – after he had filled the radiator and fuel bottle – the engine started first time and it ran quite smoothly. The vehicle drove off without producing as much smoke as we'd expected.

It was an experience to just see this truck, but I still feel regret that I did not accept the owner's offer to go for a drive with him.

The vehicles in the country vary drastically – from pre-war machines to the very latest 4x4 models. The drivers appeared to be completely mad. South African tax drivers could go for lessons there. They overtake on the left or right side, even in the face of oncoming traffic.

We did, however, learn a few things from the Georgian drivers. Nobody got angry and they do yield and give way, even though it may legally be their right of way.

We drove 2500km on country roads in the 4x4s we hired there. But when we stayed in Tbilisi, the capital, we hired a bus to take us around. That was the only way we could stay alive! **LW**



Above: A prime example of a Russian truck that just refuses to die. As can be seen below, there are many things wrong with it, including a rusted fuel tank that has been replaced by a plastic bottle, but it keeps soldiering on.



Keeping your cool

When it comes to ensuring the longevity of an engine, a vehicle's cooling system is critically important. And if you plan on crawling slowly over hard terrain, a well functioning cooling system becomes even more important. In this first section of a two-part article, Jake Venter explains how you can ensure that your 4x4 stays cool under pressure



The cooling system on an off-road vehicle is often under severe strain. When you go really slowly over difficult terrain, there is sometimes not enough airflow to enable the radiator to function optimally. This means that the cooling system must be in tip-top condition and kept that way through proper maintenance.

The first step is to make sure the system is filled with the correct fluid. Every manufacturer specifies a particular anti-freeze product that must be added to good quality water to produce a "radiator fill". This is usually a combination of corrosion inhibitor and anti-freeze, and has to be added in a specific proportion. It should be present in the water at all times – not just in winter – because it also raises the boiling point and inhibits rust. The mixture should be changed at least every 18 months because the chemicals lose their effectiveness over time.

Many modern cooling systems are sealed and have a separate overflow reservoir. A weekly check to see that the level does not go below the low-level mark on the reservoir is about all that is normally needed to ensure that everything is fine.

Should the level drop regularly, you will need to search for a leak. In some engine designs, an empty system has to be filled in a special way shown in the workshop manual, to ensure that air doesn't get trapped in the system.

Small leaks can sometimes be stopped by using a good radiator sealer, but more and more manuals are warning against

their use, probably because inferior products are flooding the market.

Accessory belt tension and condition is important, but



the belt can only be properly inspected by loosening it or removing it, as most of the visible damage will be on the inside.

Turn the belt inside out. That's where most of the ageing will take place.

There are at present three kinds of belts in use, and they each have to be set at different tensions:

On V-belts, the tension should be adjusted so that the longest free length can be pushed inwards by about 15-17mm.

On multiple-grooved belts, the belt should be very tight. Average inwards push values would be about 9-11mm on a new belt, and 12-14mm on an old belt. This is because a new belt stretches slightly in the first few hours of operation. A good mechanic would use a tension gauge to set it, and if you are unsure about belt tension you should have it checked.

Serpentine belts are common

on the latest engines. They consist of one long belt that drives all the accessories. They are very expensive but long-lasting, and are usually replaced together with their special tensioner pulley.

Belt noise

Power steering belts make a noise when they slip, especially if you turn sharply, but alternator/water pump

belts seldom make a noise, unless they also drive the power steering pump. If the belt is very loose, the alternator warning light will come on, but slight slippage can only be detected by gauging the pulley temperature after a run. If it is too hot to touch, then the belt has been slipping.

Electric fans

Electric fans are very popular because they only work when they have to, thus saving fuel, and even give you an extra three to five kilowatts to use on the road when they are not working. Their operation is normally controlled by a thermo-switch on the cylinder head, which opens when the water temperature reaches about 90 degrees, bringing the fan into action. If the engine is hot enough to trigger the fan, but it doesn't, you can test the thermo-switch

by pulling off one of its leads. If the fan starts to run, the switch is faulty. If it doesn't, the wiring or the fan motor is suspect. Loose connections, a broken wire or a blown fuse are more likely than fan motor failure.

Radiator cap

Another item that requires careful checking is the radiator cap, but do not remove it from a hot engine. If you have to, wrap a cloth around it and stand to one side, then turn the cap slowly as far as the safety stop, and wait for all the steam and hot air to exit from the overflow before turning it further. If you do not follow these instructions, you might get scalded when the cap suddenly flies upwards, releasing hot water and steam.

The radiator cap's purpose is to keep the radiator pressure at the required level (the figure is usually stamped on the cap), but with ageing the spring gets weaker and the seal deteriorates. Eventually, it will allow the pressure to drop and water to leak out. This leak may be slow or fast, so an unexplained leak can often be traced to the cap. For example, if you've just filled up with water and the engine overheats 20 minutes later from lack of water, and you can't find a leak, then you can be almost sure the cap is to blame. If the inside of the cap shows any traces of oil, then it's likely that the cylinder head gasket is developing a leak. **LW**

Jake Venter will continue his discussion on engine cooling next month.



BUYING USED
With Warren Strong

JEEP
WRANGLERS

So you want to buy a Jeep?

Jeep Wranglers are very popular second-hand buys. Why? Because they offer great value for money. But which version should you go for? Warren Strong offers his help as you wrangle with this question

When it comes to out-of-the-box hardcore 4x4s, you'd struggle to find a better vehicle than the Jeep Wrangler. It is a phenomenally capable off-road vehicle.

For this reason, Wranglers are popular second-hand vehicles. You can generally pick up a good one for an affordable price and, because it is so capable in standard guise, you don't need to spend a lot of money modifying it before hitting the trail. (But this doesn't stop Wrangler owners from kitting out their 4x4s!)

4.0 Straight-six petrol

So what should you take into consideration when buying a used Jeep? Well, the most important thing to consider is what lurks beneath the bonnet of your prospective 4x4. If you're looking at a late-1990s or early-2000s model, it will be powered by Jeep's old straight-six four-litre engine.

The good news is that this is

a wonderfully reliable unit. In fact, I'm willing to bet that the powerplant will outlast the body. And should something go wrong, it is basic enough to repair in the middle of nowhere.

The bad news, though, is that it is heavy on fuel. And to make matters worse, this heavy fuel consumption doesn't result in impressive performance, which is actually underwhelming. And the gearboxes are rather rough. The best gearbox to go for is the six-speed manual, which was released with the 2004 face-lifted model.

There isn't much to worry about when it comes to niggles. Just look out for crank and cam sensors that pack up at around 200 000km.

3.8 Petrol

The old four-litre engine was replaced by a 3,8-litre petrol model in 2007, and this stayed in production until 2012.

Like the 4.0, the 3.8 is heavy on fuel without offering much in the way of performance. Moreover, it was offered with a frustrating auto 'box that tended to worsen the Jeep's fuel consumption.

When dealing with a steep hill, the gearbox tended to suddenly drop two gears, sending the needle high into the rev range and burning fuel at an alarming rate.

Still, the 3,8-litre engine is robust and reliable, so it should provide you with years of service.

2.8 CRD oilburner

The 2.8 CRD oilburner was released in 2007 and is still being offered today. Considering how thirsty the petrol engines had been, the CRD

proved pretty popular.

But is it the engine to opt for? Not necessarily. The technology used in the CRD is rather crude and basic.

More worrying, however, is that the engine seems to have reliability problems. The consensus appears to be that the 20 000km service intervals are too long – 10 000km would have been a better number.

A lot of engines are having bearing problems between 100 000km and 200 000km, which points to an oil issue.

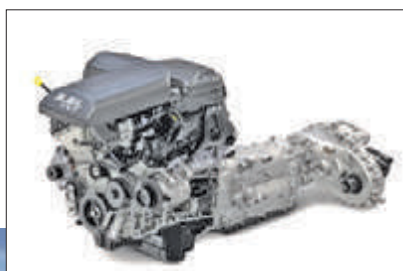
So be careful when buying a 2.8 CRD. Check the service history. If you can find one that was serviced more regularly than suggested, that would be ideal, but finding one won't be easy.

If you do purchase a CRD, use the best oil you can find and have your vehicle serviced every 10 000km.

3.6 V6 Pentastar petrol

I have heard nothing but praise for this engine, and for good reason: it is an absolute gem. Not only is it powerful but it is also surprisingly frugal. Some owners even claim consumption figures of around 13 litres per 100km. So buying a Pentastar Wrangler is probably a better idea than getting a CRD. True, it will be heavier on fuel, but it will also be more powerful, more refined and more reliable.

Sadly, second-hand models are still quite pricey because the Pentastar hasn't been around for very long, but if you have the money to spend on one, you won't be disappointed. **lw**



Inset: The 3.6-litre Pentastar V6 petrol engine is your best bet when buying a second-hand Jeep Wrangler. Above: The Wrangler came in many shapes and sizes, so it would be best to shop around and decide which one fits in best with your lifestyle.

Little black numbers

Stiletto snakes might not be as feared as Africa's infamous mambas and cobras, but don't let their small size and reserved nature lull you into complacency. These little snakes can do some serious damage



SNAKE TALK
With Johan Marais

**STILETTO
SNAKES**

While living in the Congo, a South African expatriate found a smallish black snake in his empty swimming pool. He removed it from the pool with the pool net, put on an industrial rubber glove and picked it up. The snake bit him on the finger, with one fang penetrating both the glove and his skin. What followed was immediate and severe pain.

The man was rushed to a clinic. He felt nauseous, complained of unbearable pain and soon died.

The snake responsible was one of the stiletto snakes, previously known as mole adders, in the genus *Atractaspis*.

There are about 20 *Atractaspis* species in Africa, with Bibron's stiletto snake (*Atractaspis bibronii*) the most common in SA.

Stiletto snakes are very reserved and often quite small, perhaps 30cm-50cm in length, although Bibron's stiletto snake may exceed 80cm. They spend most of their time underground where they search for snakes and lizards, but they may also prey on small rodents or reptile eggs.

On hot summer nights, especially after heavy rains, the stilettoes tend to come up to the surface, and this is when people are at risk. Most victims are people who accidentally stand on them, but a large number of victims are bitten when they attempt to capture or handle one of these snakes.

For their size, they have large fangs. The stiletto is capable of protruding a fang beyond the jaw and may even use it in a stabbing fashion. Because of this, it is one of few snakes that cannot be held safely in any manner. If gripped behind the neck, in snake handlers' usual fashion, the snake



Bibron's Stiletto Snake (*Atractaspis bibronii*).



Above, left: Fasciotomy after two bites from an *Atractaspis*. Right: Physical result of *Atractaspis* bites.



Mole Snake Juvenile (*Pseudaspis cana*).

protrudes a fang and twists its neck, usually managing to get a fang at least into a finger. Some handlers have been bitten two or three times before they have managed to release the snake.

For some reason many people, including experienced snake handlers, mistake the stiletto for harmless snakes such as the black file snake or the Cape wolf snake. Inexperienced people who come across one often think it is a harmless mole snake, despite the fact that the stiletto actually looks nothing like a mole snake.

Stiletto snake venom is potentially cytotoxic and causes immediate pain and swelling. As the swelling spreads, blisters may form and this invariably results in tissue damage. A bite on a finger is particularly bad as the local tissue damage often results in a finger (or at least part of it) having to be amputated.

To date, we have not had any fatal stiletto bites in SA, but elsewhere in Africa a number of fatalities have been recorded. As there is no anti-venom for the bite of this snake, doctors find it difficult to treat. Other than giving the victim painkillers and keeping the bitten area slightly elevated and clean, there is little that can be done, and early surgical intervention is seldom advised. It is only after about a week that the damage done by the venom can be assessed and further treatment decided upon. **LW**

Leisure Wheels readers are welcome to contact me about snake awareness and venomous snake handling courses.

For more information, email me at: johan@africansnakebiteinstitute.com



VOETSPORE DIARY

With Johan
Badenhorst

INTO AFRICA

The longest road on the continent

Travellers in Africa come across some seemingly endless roads through nowhere, but the longest of them all – at least psychologically – is in Kenya. It stretches from Archer's Post to Moyale on the Ethiopian border, and is 467km long

How could this 467km road in Kenya be the longest in Africa, you might ask? Surely there are longer roads than this? Yes there are, actually, but this road, running through the Didi Galgalu Desert, has certainly *felt* the "longest" for many travellers. Traversing it isn't easy.

The road is well described by American travel writer and novelist Paul Theroux in his book, *Dark Star Safari*. It is about travelling by public transport from Cairo to Cape Town.

In 2001, when Theroux travelled south on this road, vehicles still trundled along in convoy, escorted by an armed guard. This did not, however,

prevent bandits from opening fire on Theroux's bus. He was lucky not to be harmed. Many other travellers have been less fortunate.

Most travellers will take the road between Archer's Post and Moyale only once, such is the experience. Bandits, hailing from Somalia to Sudan, hide behind rocks in the barren landscape. When a vehicle approaches, one of them will flag down the vehicle, normally with an empty bottle to indicate a need for water. Most travellers will stop and offer assistance. That is when the robber's accomplices jump out from behind the rocks and rob the poor passengers of

all their belongings. The aim is seldom to kill. The bandits want food, money, vehicles and other much-needed supplies that can be tough to find in this very inhospitable place.

We have been "fortunate" to travel this route several times. The first time, which we thought would also be the last, was in 2004 on our first trip up north, all the way to Cairo. By then the armed convoys had been discontinued because the authorities felt that there was less of a threat from bandits than in previous years. Still, we were stopped just outside Marsabit and told by the police that the road was considered dangerous,

and that we should be vigilant and not make any unnecessary stops. We readily agreed.

Actually, we did not approach Marsabit from Archer's Post. We came in from the west, from Loyangalani and Kalacha. We crossed the Chalbi Desert and stayed over at Marsabit at a campsite that belonged to a Swiss gentleman and his Kenyan wife.

Early the next morning, we hit the road. It was in terrible condition. Our three Nissans were virtually shaken to pieces. Along the way a few people tried to flag us down, but we just looked the other way and drove on. Perhaps they really were desperate for water. How could



The "longest route in Africa" may only be 467km, but in conditions like this it took a very long time to complete it.



Above: There are still sections where the going is extremely tough. A few mud recoveries were needed before the group arrived in Addis Ababa.



Above: The Kenyans have teamed up with the Chinese to build tar roads on some of the major routes but, as can be seen below, travellers are still at the mercy of Mother Nature.

we be sure? We had been advised not to stop.

Around lunchtime, we approached Turmi. The worst part of the road was behind us, so we stopped for lunch at what was called

the Turmi Hotel. This was not much more than a little inn where we had some goat stew and rice. It was excellent. No beer was served as this was serious Muslim country.

We continued our journey westward to the Ethiopian border where we arrived after sunset, without incident.

In 2011, we planned another route north, avoiding the northern part of this notorious stretch. The plan was to enter Ethiopia along Lake Turkana after travelling from Archer's Post to Marsabit, and then swing left into the Chalbi Desert en route to Omorate. But we had visa problems and had to turn back. And then we had car problems, so we eventually had to do the whole Archer's Post to Moyale route again. Thankfully, we encountered no hassles on the road.

Last year things were going to be different, or so we thought. Once more we planned to go to Ethiopia via the Lake Turkana road, but we again encountered visa problems. We had to get to Addis as soon as possible to have our visas extended. This implied that we could not travel at our leisure along the Lake Turkana route. We had to take the road



between Archer's Post and Moyale to make Addis before our visas expired.

North of Archer's Post, most of the road was brand-new tarmac. About 100km from Marsabit it turned to gravel, but there

were major roadworks on the way as the Kenyan authorities, in conjunction with the Chinese, were building new roads through the desert.

We arrived at Marsabit, which is like an island in the middle of the desert. I've never been there when it wasn't pouring with rain. The "island" seems to make its own weather.

We filled up with fuel in the town, and then set off north. What a surprise to be doing it on a brand new tarred road. We were doing 120km/h through the Didi Galgalu Desert!

The road was not completely finished, and the stretches where the road builders were still working was at times very difficult.

Along the way we also had to do a few recoveries of vehicles stuck in the mud. Yet we managed to do Archer's Post/Moyale in less than a day – a route that had previously taken a minimum of two days.

So the "longest road on the continent" is no more. It only belongs in the memories of those who were fortunate (or unfortunate) enough to travel through the northern part of Kenya before the Chinese intervened. **LW**



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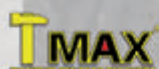
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5-star digs to grade-5 trails

When it comes to deciding on a 4x4 trail to visit over a weekend, there is more to consider than simply the difficulty rating of the trail. Here's what you should keep in mind when picking your next off-road adventure



4X4 TIPS
With Glyn Demmer

TRAIL RATINGS

Generally, trails are rated from one to five, with five being the ultimate test of man and machine. At this level one requires a lot of driving knowledge and (usually) a modified 4x4.

But I don't want to focus too much on trail ratings in this article. Obviously, the degree of difficulty is a consideration when selecting a trail, but what else should be taken into account? After all, visiting an off-road destination in your 4x4 is all about the overall experience. Recently, I have heard quite a few people complain about trails, but from their grumblings it was clear that they hadn't asked the right questions beforehand.

A good example of a trail that is all about the overall experience is the Lebombo Trail in the Kruger National Park. It isn't particularly difficult so why, then, is it booked up for at least 18 months?

Well, it is about the ability to shower in the great outdoors (take your own shower), cook brunch while gazing at endless

vistas and sleeping among the animals. Here you see parts of the park that a normal visitor would not see.

Moolmanshoek in the eastern Free State offers something very different from Lebombo. It is a wonderful trail in terms of driving, but it also offers five-star catering and accommodation. Visitors have the unique opportunity of driving all day over really rough terrain, and then relaxing with a hot shower and an excellent meal in the restaurant. It is off-road bliss!

Moolmanshoek is well run, and the venue is extremely popular, both as a wedding venue and a getaway destination. In addition, the game has been restocked, domestic animals moved out and the bush is virtually indigenous.

Then you get the real hell holes – horrible places with nothing to offer. I once visited such a trail, but left as soon as I could. There was no wood for the braai, nor gas for the showers nor even toilet paper – all of which should have been there on our arrival. The trail

was badly marked, poorly laid out and not well maintained.

Before making a booking at a trail, it's important that you ask the right questions. First, peruse the trail website and see what is offered. One man's meat is another man's poison.

Regulations, mooted years ago, seem unlikely to be put in place and trails generally are not members of tourism associations or grading councils, so ask these questions to avoid disappointment:

- Is the trail a full trail or a training track? How long is it? Is it marked?
- Is there a route map or is the trail guided?
- Are there escape routes at the most difficult sections?
- What accommodation and ablutions are offered?
- What activities are there for both children and adults?
- What are the catering options?
- Are there kitchen facilities?
- Is there a restaurant, or is there a nearby town where food can be bought?

- What is the environmental character of the trail? Is it pristine bush?
- Where is the nearest medical facility?

Always ensure that you travel with a well stocked first-aid kit, as children tend to let their hair down when outdoors. Common injuries are cuts, grazes and minor burns.

And don't forget to ask about cellphone reception and whether there is electricity.

Follow these guidelines, and you will be able to relax and enjoy yourself. There are so many great trail routes in SA that you could visit a different one every month. **LW**

The trail isn't particularly difficult so why, then, is it booked up for at least 18 months?



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Q3 / RS Q3	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
1.4T S	402 500	4/1.4T	110/5000	250/1500	5.5
1.4T S auto	419 500	4/1.4T	110/5000	250/1500	5.8
2.0T quattro	499 000	4/2.0T	132/4000	320/1400	6.5
2.0TDI quattro	515 000	4/2.0TD	135/3500	380/1800	5.3
RS Q3 quattro	769 500	5/2.5T	250/5300	450/1600	8.4

Maintenance plan: 5 years / 100 000 km

Fuel tank: 64 litres.. **Average sales per month:** 150

» The Q3 is trendy, modern and – in typical Audi fashion – very well put together. The ride is sporty yet wonderfully comfortable and luxurious. It's not an off-roader, but it can deal with gravel tracks. We reckon that, as an overall package, this "Q" may be the best of the lot. Pricing is reasonably competitive, but the optional extra list will certainly add a lot more rands to the deal. **LW choice:** 2.0TDI quattro. **Also look at:** BMW X1, MINI Countryman, Mercedes-Benz GLA, Subaru XV



A4 ALLROAD	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
2.0T	525 000	4/2.0T	165/4300	350/1500	7.0
2.0TDI	530 500	4/2.0TD	130/4200	380/1750	6.0

Maintenance plan: 5 years/100 000 km

Fuel tank: 61 litres. **Average sales per month:** n/a

» More station wagon than SUV, the Allroad is a great option for those looking for something low-slung and nimble, but still (reasonably) rugged and spacious. The A4 isn't going to tackle any serious trails, but it can handle a dirt road, and it looks pretty funky with its black cladding. This is not a 4x4 in the traditional sense, but it is a great family vehicle. Perfect for those weekend visits to the farm! **LW choice:** 2.0 TDI. **Also look at:** Subaru Outback, Volvo V60 Cross Country / XC70



Q5 / SQ5	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
2.0T S quattro	559 000	4/2.0T	132/4000	320/1500	7.5
2.0TDI S quattro	565 000	4/2.0TD	130/4200	380/1750	5.9
2.0TDI S quattro auto	582 000	4/2.0TD	130/4200	380/1750	6.0
2.0T SE quattro	636 000	4/2.0T	165/4500	350/1500	7.9
3.0T SE quattro	722 500	V6/3.0S	200/4750	400/2500	8.5
3.0TDI SE quattro	742 000	V6/3.0TD	180/4000	580/1750	6.4
SQ5 TDI quattro	867 000	V6/3.0TD	230/3900	650/1450	6.8

Maintenance plan: 5 years/100 000 km

Fuel tank: 75 litres.. **Average sales per month:** 113

» Designed to fill the gap between the massive Q7 and the Q3, the Q5 is a dazzling piece of niche engineering. A highly aspirational vehicle, with the (very) few weak points far outweighed by the great ones. The turbocharged petrol engines are outstanding. **LW choice:** 2.0T quattro. **Also look at:** Subaru Forester, BMW X3, Land Rover Discovery Sport, Porsche Macan, Lexus NX, Volvo XC60



Q7	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
3.0TDI quattro	855 500	V6/3.0TD	180/3800	550/1750	7.4
3.0T quattro	900 000	V6/3.0S	245/5500	440/2900	10.7
4.2TDI quattro	1 055 000	V8/4.1TD	250/4000	760/1750	9.9

Maintenance plan: 5 years/100 000 km

Fuel tank: 100 litres. **Average sales per month:** 21

» Big and imposing, the Q7 makes no excuses for what it is: a super-luxurious, top-end SUV, with a price to match the image. This is a luxury barge that you won't often find in the bundu, but it can go surprisingly far off the beaten path, especially when it comes to sand. **LW choice:** 4.2TDI. **Also look at:** BMW X5, Infiniti QX80, Mercedes-Benz GL, Porsche Cayenne, VW Touareg, Land Rover Range Rover Sport / Range Rover, Volvo XC90



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X1	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
sDrive18i	402 656	4/2.0	110/6400	200/3600	7.7
sDrive18i auto	419 769	4/2.0	110/6400	200/3600	7.9
sDrive20i	427 309	4/2.0T	135/5000	270/1250	6.9
sDrive20i auto	444 796	4/2.0T	135/5000	270/1250	6.7
sDrive20d	441 923	4/2.0TD	135/4000	380/1750	4.9
sDrive20d auto	460 539	4/2.0TD	135/4000	380/1750	5.0

xDrive20i	482 746	4/2.0T	135/5000	270/1250	7.5
xDrive20i auto	499 822	4/2.0T	135/5000	270/1250	7.1
xDrive20d	497 565	4/2.0TD	135/4000	380/1750	5.5
xDrive20d auto	515 360	4/2.0TD	135/4000	380/1750	5.4
xDrive28i auto	554 925	4/2.0T	180/5000	350/1250	7.2

Maintenance plan: 5 years / 100 000 km

Fuel tank: 63 litres. **Average sales per month:** 14

» The X1 still epitomises the funky next-generation crossovers, and armed with a range of state-of-the-art engines, the (modern) go is there to match the show. This is mainly the market it is aimed at the adventurous at heart who wants to head out onto dirt roads without fear of getting stuck or breaking down, with a mountain bike attached to the BMW's rear door. **LW choice:** xDrive20d. **Also look at:** MINI Countryman, Audi Q3, Mercedes GLA, Volvo V40 CC



X3	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
xDrive20i	548 938	4/2.0T	135/5000	270/1250	7.4
xDrive20i auto	566 607	4/2.0T	135/5000	270/1250	6.9
xDrive20d	578 629	4/2.0TD	140/4000	400/1750	5.0
xDrive28i	648 809	4/2.0T	180/5000	400/1750	7.0
xDrive30d	733 975	6/3.0TD	190/4000	560/2000	5.7
xDrive35i	758 990	6/3.0T	225/5800	400/1200	8.3

Maintenance plan: 5 years / 100 000 km

Fuel tank: 67 litres.. **Average sales per month:** 111

» The X3 is (reasonably) big, fast, smart and all-round way better than the original X3. Especially driver-type drivers will love the way the X3 handles, and feels. And with up to 225 kW of power, it's fast enough too! It still doesn't like 4x4 driving. On gravel roads, in mud and sand, the powerful new X3 is quite capable, though. Run-flat tyres and off-road terrain however, don't like each other at all. **LW choice:** xDrive20i. **Also look at:** Audi Q5, Infiniti QX50, Land Rover Discovery Sport, Lexus NX, Porsche Macan, Volvo XC60



X4	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
xDrive20i	661 707	4/2.0T	135/5000	270/1250	6.9
xDrive20d	664 629	4/2.0TD	140/4000	400/1750	5.0
xDrive28i	725 809	4/2.0T	180/5000	350/1250	7.0
xDrive30d	811 475	6/3.0TD	190/4000	560/1500	5.7
xDrive35i	820 990	6/3.0T	225/5800	400/1200	8.3

Maintenance plan: 5 years / 100 000 km

Fuel tank: 74 litres.. **Average sales per month:** 64

» BMW's rather unusual X6 SUV/ coupe has received a smaller sibling in the form of the X4. Like the X3 is a more compact version of the X5, the X4 takes the design of the X6, and places it into a more compact package. It has AWD, but isn't really designed for off-road driving. The X4 is made for tar roads, combining the feel of a coupe with the ride height of an SUV. **LW choice:** xDrive30d. **Also look at:** Land Rover Range Rover Evoque, Porsche Macan, Lexus NX



X5	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
xDrive35i	912 400	6/3.0T	225/5800	400/1200	8.5
xDrive30d	925 694	6/3.0TD	190/4000	560/1500	5.9
xDrive40d	1 045 296	6/3.0TD	230/4400	630/1500	6.0
xDrive50i	1 157 670	V8/4.4T	330/5500	650/2000	9.6
M50d	1 215 438	6/3.0TD	280/4000	740/2000	6.6
X5 M	1 722 659	V8/4.4T	423/6000	750/2200	11.1

Maintenance plan: 5 years / 100 000km

Fuel tank: 80 litres. **Average sales per month:** 148

» BMW has not strayed too far from its winning SUV formula. The X5 remains an elegant and sporty SUV, and continues to lead the segment. **LW choice:** xDrive30d. **Also look at:** Audi Q7, Mercedes-Benz/-AMG GLE, Infiniti QX70, Porsche Cayenne, Land Rover Range Rover Sport, Volvo XC90



X6	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
xDrive35i	993 503	6/3.0T	225/5800	400/1200	8.5
xDrive40d	1 098 912	6/3.0TD	230/4400	630/1500	6.2
xDrive50i	1 220 273	V8/4.4T	330/5500	650/2000	9.7
M50d	1 385 540	6/3.0TD	280/4000	740/2000	6.6
X6 M	1 757 659	V8/4.4T	423/6000	750/2200	11.1

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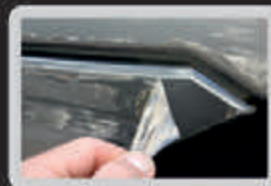


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Maintenance plan: 5 years / 100 000 km. **Fuel tank:** 85 litres. **Average sales per month:** 47.

Maintenance plan: 5 years / 100 000 km >>> As the even sportier sibling of the X5, the X6 attempts to marry the sleek, sporty design of a coupe with the large frame of an SUV. Is it successful? We'll leave it up to you to decide, but the vehicle undoubtedly has a lot of presence on the road. **LW Choice:** M50d, if you can afford it. **Also look at:** Mercedes-Benz/-AMG GLE Coupé, Porsche Cayenne, Land Rover Range Rover Sport



CHEVROLET Toll free 0800 422 777 Website www.chevrolet.co.za

CAPTIVA	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
2.4 LT	366 500	4/2.4	123/5600	230/4600	8.8
2.4 LT auto	384 000	4/2.4	123/5600	230/4600	8.8
2.2D LT	398 600	4/2.2TD	135/3800	400/2000	7.9

Service plan: 3 years / 60 000 km **Fuel tank:** 65 litres. **Average sales per month:** 108. >>> The Captiva has been a very good seller in its class. It's a good, honest package, offering quite a bit of car for the money. It even has seven seats, and an adult can actually sit in the last row without any ill-effects. The interior is loaded with standard kit – making the package all the more attractive. Sure, it has an electronic 4x4 system, but it doesn't like tackling dongas. **LW choice:** 2.4 LT. **Also look at:** Hyundai ix35, Kia Sportage, Nissan X-Trail, Subaru Forester



TRAILBLAZER	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
2.5D LT	439 300	4/2.5TD	120/3600	380/2000	7.4
2.8D LTZ auto	518 700	4/2.8TD	144/3600	500/2000	9.5
2.8D 4x4 LTZ	556 700	4/2.8TD	144/3600	440/2000	8.0
2.8D 4x4 LTZ auto	575 500	4/2.8TD	144/3600	500/2000	9.5

Service plan: 5 years / 90 000 km **Fuel tank:** 76 litres **Average sales per month:** 71 >>> The Trailblazer is probably the closest thing to a real rival the Toyota Fortuner has ever encountered. Based on the underpinnings of the sixth-generation Isuzu KB, and boasting a raft of new tech, safety, awesome packaging and powerful and modern new engines, the Blazer has – on paper – all that it takes to trump the Fortuner. Except a Toyota badge, that is. The 4x4 Trailblazer models have a part-time transfer case with 2H, 4H and 4LOW settings. Ample ground clearance combined with a range of electronic driving aids, and overall the Trailblazer is a pretty mean off-roader. However, the lack of a rear differential lock could be its undoing. **LW choice:** 2.8 LTZ 4x4 auto. **Also look at:** Toyota Fortuner, Mitsubishi Pajero Sport, Land Rover Discovery Sport



CHRYSLER Toll free 0800 CHRYSLER (0800 2479 7537) Website www.chrysler.co.za

GRAND VOYAGER	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
2.8CRD LX	609 990	4/2.8TD	120/3800	360/1600	8.4
2.8CRD Limited	674 900	4/2.8TD	120/3800	360/1600	8.4

Service plan: 3-year/100 000km **Fuel tank:** 76 litres. **Average sales per month:** 5 >>> The Grand Voyager offers a vast cabin and a nifty seating arrangement. All models are well equipped and the 2,8-litre turbodiesel engine offers a generous wallop of torque. It's getting on in life, so it's worth checking out competitor vehicles. **LW Choice:** 2,8 CRD Limited **Also look at:** Volkswagen Caravelle, Mercedes Benz V-Class



CITROËN Toll free 0860 211 112 Website www.citroen.co.za

C4 CACTUS	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
60kW Feel	224 900	3/1.2	60/5750	118/2750	4.6
e-THP 81kW Feel	259 900	3/1.2T	81/5500	205/1500	4.7
e-THP 81kW Shine	284 900	3/1.2T	81/5500	205/1500	4.7

Service plan: 5 years / 100 000 km **Fuel tank:** 50 litres. **Average sales per month:** 24 >>> Citroën has introduced one of the funkiest little crossovers to arrive on the scene in quite some time. Sure, it doesn't have AWD and it doesn't boast tons of luggage space, but it does have trendy styling and a great engine. It also has enough ground clearance to ensure that you can travel on ugly gravel roads without hassle. Most importantly, the Cactus sports a very attractive price tag. Considering all it offers, the crossover offers great value for money. **LW Choice:** 1.2 Turbocharged Shine. **Also look at:** Renault Captur, Ford EcoSport, Peugeot 2008, Opel Mokka.



C4 AIRCROSS	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
2.0i Attraction	313 900	4/2.0	113/6000	198/4200	7.5
2.0i Comfort	337 900	4/2.0	113/6000	198/4200	7.5
2.0i Seduction auto	360 900	4/2.0	113/6000	198/4200	7.6
HdI 115 Seduction	376 900	4/1.6TD			
HdI 115 4WD Comfort	387 900	4/1.6TD			
2.0i 4WD Exclusive	410 900	4/2.0			
2.0i 4WD Exclusive	410 900	4/2.0			



Service plan: 5 years / 100 000 km

Fuel tank: 63 litres. **Average sales per month:** 5 >>> It's cool, it's hip and it's rather pretty too. This is French manufacturer Citroën's new C4 Aircross – a suave compact SUV with French flair written all over it. Sure, it's not a real 4x4. But it's the Louis Vuitton of the soft-roader market. You'd never guess it, but this C4 Aircross is actually based on the Mitsubishi ASX and Outlander platform. Serious! The Citroën's intelligent 4WD system senses wheel slip and adjusts the power between the front and rear axles accordingly. The centre diff can be locked to provide a 50/50 split between the two axles. **LW choice:** HdI 115 Seduction. **Also look at:** Kia Sportage, Subaru XV, Hyundai ix35, Nissan Qashqai

FIAT Toll free 0800 FIATSA (0800 342872) Website www.fiat.co.za

500X	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
1.6 Pop Star	310 900	4/1.6	81/5500	152/4500	6.4
1.4T Cross	344 900	4/1.4T	103/5000	230/1750	6.0
1.4T Cross auto	359 900	4/1.4T	103/5000	230/1750	5.7
1.4T Cross Plus	379 900	4/1.4T	103/5000	230/1750	6.0
1.4T Cross Plus auto	394 900	4/1.4T	103/5000	230/1750	5.7

Maintenance Plan: 3 years / 100 000 km

Fuel tank: 48 litres. **Average sales per month:** 22

This is the Italians' idea of what a Jeep Renegade should have looked like. It rides on the same platform as the Jeep and has the same interior, but Fiat offers a wider range of engines and specification levels. It's expensive for a compact crossover, but this little tyke will definitely stand out in a crowd. **LW choice:** We haven't driven one yet **Also look at:** Jeep Renegade, Opel Mokka



FORD Toll free 0860 011 022 Website www.ford.co.za

ECOSPORT	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
1.5 Ambiente	213 900	4/1.5	82/6300	138/4400	6.5
1.0T Trend	249 900	3/1.0T	92/6000	170/1400	5.7



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1.0T Titanium	270 900	3/1.0T	92/6000	170/1400	5.7
1.5TDCi Trend	253 900	4/1.5TD	66/3750	205/2000	4.5
1.5TDCi Titanium	274 900	4/1.5TD	66/3750	205/2000	4.5
1.5 Titanium auto	274 900	4/1.5	82/6300	138/4400	6.5

Service Plan: 4 years / 60 000 km

Fuel tank: 52 litres. **Average sales per month:** 732 >> Don't underestimate this little soft-roader – with 200mm ground clearance it's ready for that middlemannedje. No AWD version is planned for SA as yet, though, as it makes up less than 10% of the Brazilian market, where the EcoSport made its debut. It's surprisingly spacious, light on fuel and easy to drive. **LW Choice:** 1.0T Titanium. **Also look at:** Nissan Juke, Opel Mokka, Renault Duster, Peugeot 2008



RANGER	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
SuperCab					
2.5 Hi-Rider XL	277 900	4/2.5	122/5500	226/4500	10.9
2.2 Hi-Rider XL	319 900	4/2.2TD	110/3700	375/1500	7.7
3.2 Hi-Rider XLS	392 900	5/3.2TD	147/3000	470/1500	9.3
3.2 4x4 XLS	441 900	5/3.2TD	147/3000	470/1500	9.8
3.2 4x4 XLS auto	455 900	5/3.2TD	147/3000	470/1500	9.7
Double Cab					
2.5 Hi-Rider XL	308 900	4/2.5	122/5500	226/4500	10.9
2.2 Hi-Rider XL	328 900	4/2.2TD	110/3700	375/1500	7.7
2.2 Hi-Rider XLS	412 900	4/2.2TD	110/3700	375/1500	7.7
2.2 4x4 XL-Plus	402 900	4/2.2TD	110/3700	375/1500	8.2
2.2 4x4 XLS	468 900	4/2.2TD	110/3700	375/1500	8.3
3.2 Hi-Rider XLT	467 900	5/3.2TD	147/3000	470/1500	9.3
3.2 Hi-Rider XLT auto	481 900	5/3.2TD	147/3000	470/1500	9.1
3.2 4x4 XLT	526 900	5/3.2TD	147/3000	470/1500	9.8
3.2 4x4 XLT auto	537 900	5/3.2TD	147/3000	470/1500	9.7
3.2 Hi-Rider Wildtrak	491 900	5/3.2TD	147/3000	470/1500	9.3
3.2 Hi-Rider Wildtrak auto	501 900	5/3.2TD	147/3000	470/1500	9.1
3.2 4x4 Wildtrak	558 900	5/3.2TD	147/3000	470/1500	9.7

Service plan: 5 years / 90 000 km **Fuel tank:**

80 litres. **Average sales per month:** 1 728 (June) >> The Ranger is really good-looking, powerful, offers good value for money, has loads of interior space and comfort, rides like a car, and even comes with a five-star Euro NCAP safety rating! So it's just about a full house from Ford. Rugged underpinnings are now complimented by modern technology such as traction control, hill start assist and so on, but only in the top versions. All the 4x4 derivatives get low range and a rear diff lock. **LW choice:** 2.2TDCi XLS 4x4. **Also look at:** Toyota Hilux, Nissan Navara, VW Amarok, Isuzu KB



KUGA	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
1.5T Ambiente	328 900	4/1.5T	110/5700	240/1600	6.6
1.5T Ambiente auto	344 900	4/1.5T	132/5700	240/1600	7.0
1.5T Trend	365 900	4/1.5T	110/5700	240/1600	6.6
1.5T Trend auto	379 900	4/1.5T	132/5700	240/1600	7.0
1.5T AWD Trend	407 900	4/1.5T	132/5700	240/1600	7.7
2.0TDCi AWD Trend	433 900	4/2.0TD	132/3750	400/2000	6.2
2.0T AWD Titanium	448 900	4/2.0T	177/5700	340/2000	8.8
2.0TDCi AWD Titanium	468 900	4/2.0TD	132/3750	400/2000	6.2

Service plan: 4 years / 80 000 km for 1.5T

and 2.0T; 5 years / 90 000 km for 2.0TDCi

Fuel tank: 60 litres. **Average sales per month:**

432 >> The Kuga has been making waves with its long features list, EcoBoost engine and technological additions, like a hands-free tailgate mechanism, Curve Control and lane-keep assist. Like most crossovers in its segment, it's not too fond of the rough stuff. That being said, it does have AWD and 198mm of ground clearance, so it can tackle bad gravel roads without hassle. **LW choice:** 1.5 EcoBoost Trend. **Also look at:** Toyota RAV4, Honda CR-V, VW Tiguan



TOURNEO CUSTOM	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
2.2TDCi SWB Ambiente	443 900	4/2.2TD	74/3500	310/1300	6.5
2.2TDCi LWB Ambiente	449 900	4/2.2TD	74/3500	310/1300	6.5
2.2TDCi SWB Trend	464 900	4/2.2TD	92/3500	350/1450	6.5

2.2TDCi LWB Trend	469 900	4/2.2TD	92/3500	350/1450	6.5
2.2TDCi SWB Limited	510 900	4/2.2TD	114/3500	385/1600	6.5

Service plan: n/a. **Fuel tank:** 80 litres.

Average sales per month: n/a >> Ford's Tourneo Custom offers a vast amount of space at a reasonable price. The ride quality is very good for what it is and the diesel engine delivers adequate performance. It's not as refined or luxurious as some large MPVs, but as it's half the price, we're willing to forgive it. **LW choice:** 2.2TDCi SWB Limited. **Also look at:** Hyundai H1, Kia Sedona, low-spec Mercedes V-Class



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TUNLAND	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
2.8 off-road Comfort	294 950	4/2.8TD	120/3600	360/1800	8.3
2.8 off-road Luxury	314 950	4/2.8TD	120/3600	360/1800	8.3
2.8 4x4 Comfort	379 950	4/2.8TD	120/3600	360/1800	8.3
2.8 4x4 Luxury	399 950	4/2.8TD	120/3600	360/1800	8.3

Service plan: 2 years / 40 000 km for 4x2;

5 years / 70 000 km for 4x4 **Fuel tank:** 80 litres

Average sales per month: n/a >> This is probably the best bakkie so far from China. Which doesn't mean it's perfect, of course. It is clearly modelled in size and style according to the Hilux, but overall it really opens up a new playing field for the Chinese. The Cummins engine is another plus point, as is the list of other international partners. However, pricing is not as competitive as one would expect from a Chinese brand, with the extra attention to quality obviously hiking the price. It has 230mm ground clearance, a Borg Warner transfer case with 2H, 4H and 4LOW settings, and it also has a Dana rear differential. It's a tough drivetrain that can handle some punches. However, for now the lack of a rear differential lock means it can't quite go where the rest of the bakkie clan can safely go. **LW choice:** 2.8TD 4x4 Comfort. **Also look at:** GWM Steed 5, Ford Ranger, Mitsubishi Triton, Toyota Hilux



GWM Toll free 011 805 6621 Website www.gwm.co.za

M4	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
1.5	189 900	4/1.5	77/6000	138/4200	7.2

Service plan: Optional 5 years / 60 000 km

Fuel tank: 45 litres. **Average sales per month:**

n/a >> The M4 is GWM's attempt at a small crossover. And overall, this is an impressive little car that offers exceptional value for money. It boasts loads of features. It even has a five-year/100 000km warranty and a five-year 45 000km service plan. Just don't take it very far off road! **LW choice:** We'll take it. **Also look at:** Nissan Juke, Ford EcoSport, Suzuki SX4



STEED 5	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
2.2L Lux	184 900	4/2.2	78/4600	190/2400	10.2
2.0VGT SX	229 900	4/2.0TD	78/4000	225/1400	9.3
2.4L Lux	214 900	4/2.4	100/5200	200/4000	10.7
2.4L 4x4 Lux	239 900	4/2.4	100/5200	200/4000	10.7
2.0VGT Lux	259 900	4/2.0TD	110/3600	310/1800	8.3
2.0VGT 4x4 Lux	289 900	4/2.0TD	110/3600	310/1800	8.3

Service plan: Optional 5 years / 60 000 km


Fuel tank: 70 litres. **Average sales per**

month: n/a >> As far as Chinese double cabs go, the Steed is one of the best. Sure, it's ultimately not as refined or as plush as its Japanese counterparts, but it's loaded with standard kit. Prices remain very competitive. Armed with a reasonable amount of ground clearance (195mm), and an electronic Borg Warner 4x4 system with low-range, the 4x4 Steed can go where most other double cabs go, albeit in a less refined manner. **LW choice:** 2.0 VGT double cab. **Also look at:** Tata Xenon, Nissan NP300 Hardbody



STEED 5E	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
2.4 SX	239 900	4/2.4	93/5250	200/2500	10.7
2.4 Xscape	256 900	4/2.4	93/5250	200/2500	10.7
2.0VGT SX	269 900	4/2.0TD	105/4000	305/1800	8.3
2.0VGT Xscape	289 900	4/2.0TD	105/4000	305/1800	8.3

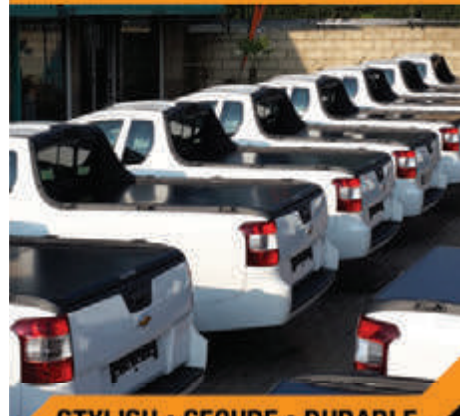
Service plan: Optional 5 years / 60 000 km **Fuel tank:** 70 litres. **Average sales per month:** n/a >> GWM South Africa now offers a more upmarket version of the



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Steed called the 5E. It is still basically a Steed, and has the same engine options, but is more luxurious and well equipped than the standard Steed 5 model. Considering the pricing, the 5E offers a whole lot of bakkie for your money, and is a great option for a leisure vehicle. **LW Choice:** 2.0 VGT Xscape. **Also look at:** Standard Steed 5, Steed 6, Foton Tunland, JMC Vigus



H5	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
2.4 City	244 900	4/2.4	100/5200	200/4000	10.3
2.4 Lux	249 900	4/2.4	100/5200	200/4000	10.3
2.4 4x4 Lux	269 900	4/2.4	100/5200	200/4000	10.3
2.0VGT Lux	284 900	4/2.0TD	110/4000	310/1800	7.6
2.0VGT Lux auto	319 900	4/2.0TD	110/4000	310/1800	9.2
2.0VGT 4x4 Lux	319 900	4/2.0TD	110/4000	310/1800	7.6
2.0VGT 4x4 Lux auto	339 900	4/2.0TD	110/4000	310/1800	9.2

Service plan: Optional 5 years / 60 000 km
Fuel tank: 74 litres. **Average sales per month:** n/a » The H5 certainly looks like the part of the modern crossover/SUV/4x4. Inside it is loaded with standard kit, but some observers may not like the copycat exterior lines. Still, pricing is keen, and the 310 Nm turbodiesel version looks really good on paper. With 180mm ground clearance and Borg Warner low-range 4x4 system, the H5 4x4 derivative can go where few drivers of 4x4s costing double the price will expect it to go. **LW choice:** H5 2.0VGT 4x4. **Also look at:** Toyota Fortuner, Mitsubishi Pajero Sport



H6	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
1.5T City	259 900	4/1.5T	105/5600	210/2200	8.5
1.5T Lux	279 900	4/1.5T	105/5600	210/2200	8.5
2.0TCI Lux	349 900	4/2.0TD	105/4000	310/1800	6.7

Service plan: Optional 5 years / 60 000 km
Fuel tank: 58 litres. **Average sales per month:** n/a » The H6 is GWM's attempt at a more urban crossover vehicle. With Subaru Forester-like good looks and a decent price tag, the H6 should do well. No AWD model available, though. **LW choice:** 2.0TCI. **Also look at:** Ford Kuga, Toyota RAV4, Honda CR-V



STEED 6	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
2.0VGT SX	299 900	4/2.0TD	105/4000	305/1800	8.8
2.0VGT Xscape	329 900	4/2.0TD	105/4000	305/1800	8.8

Service plan: Optional 5 years / 60 000 km
Fuel tank: 70 litres. **Average sales per month:** New » Following the release of JMC's Vigus and Foton's Tunland, GWM has now also released its own large bakkie than offers the size and dimensions of those double cabs offered by established brands. The Steed 6 is an excellent vehicle overall, and shows how quickly GWM is improving. The cabin is wonderfully plush and has a European feel. Engine could use a tad more power, but that's hardly a deal-breaker. **LW Choice:** 2.0 VGT Xscape. **Also look at:** Foton Tunland, JMC Vigus, Steed 5E



HONDA Toll free 011 805 6621 Website www.honda.co.za

HR-V	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
1.5 Comfort	299 900	4/1.5	88/6600	145/4600	6.2
1.8 Elegance	354 900	4/1.8	105/6500	172/4300	6.8

Service plan: 4 years / 60 000 km. **Fuel tank:** 40 litres. **Average sales per month:** 177 » Honda's take on the compact crossover segment. We haven't driven it yet, but it looks handsome and Honda has been very generous with standard specifications. The petrol engines are fairly outdated for this segment, but power delivery is up there with the best. **LW choice:** We haven't driven it yet. **Also look at:** Jeep Renegade, Fiat 500X, Kia Soul



CR-V	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
2.0 Comfort	355 900	4/2.0	114/6500	192/4300	7.7
2.0 Comfort auto	370 900	4/2.0	114/6500	192/4300	7.6
2.0 Elegance	404 100	4/2.0	114/6500	192/4300	7.7
2.0 Elegance auto	419 100	4/2.0	114/6500	192/4300	7.6
2.4 Executive AWD	520 900	4/2.4	140/7000	220/4300	8.6
2.4 Exclusive AWD	557 800	4/2.4	140/7000	220/4300	8.6

Service plan: 5 years / 90 000 km
Fuel tank: 58 litres. **Average sales per month:** 100 » The sleek CR-V is a highly accomplished option in its segment, but don't expect to be left breathless with excitement when you drive it. It is extremely well put together, and has an impeccable reliability record. A new version was recently introduced that has added a whole lot of value for money options to the line-up. The Honda doesn't come close to being a real off-roader (ground clearance is limited and no low range is fitted). But then it doesn't pretend to be an off-roader, either. **LW choice:** 2.0 Comfort. **Also look at:** Nissan X-Trail, Renault Koleos, Toyota RAV4, Ford Kuga



HYUNDAI Toll free 0861 4272 22 Website www.hyundai.co.za

ix35	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
2.0 Premium	339 900	4/2.0	116/6200	192/4000	8.5
2.0 Premium Special Edition	359 900	4/2.0	116/6200	192/4000	8.5
2.0 Premium auto	354 900	4/2.0	116/6200	192/4000	8.9
2.0 Premium auto Special Edition	374 900	4/2.0	116/6200	192/4000	8.9
1.7CRDi Premium	364 900	4/1.7TD	85/4000	260/1250	5.3
1.7CRDi Premium Special Edition	384 900	4/1.7TD	85/4000	260/1250	5.3
2.0 Executive	379 900	4/2.0	116/6200	192/4000	8.5
2.0 Executive Special Edition	394 900	4/2.0	116/6200	192/4000	8.5
2.0 Elite	404 900	4/2.0	116/6200	192/4000	8.8
2.0 Elite Special Edition	419 900	4/2.0	116/6200	192/4000	8.8
2.0CRDi Elite	434 900	4/2.0TD	130/4000	383/1800	6.5
2.0CRDi Elite Special Edition	454 900	4/2.0TD	130/4000	383/1800	6.5
2.0CRDi 4WD Elite	494 900	4/2.0TD	130/4000	392/1800	7.2
2.0CRDi 4WD Elite Special Edition	514 900	4/2.0TD	130/4000	392/1800	7.2

Service Plan: 5 years / 90 000 km
Fuel tank: 58 litres. **Average sales per month:** n/a » This CUV is even less intended for serious off-road use than the Tucson was. But the ix35 is a comfortable, affordable on-roader/soft-roader with trendy SUV looks. Mind, trendy is what sells cars in this segment, and the ix35 has got that department covered. The 4x4 derivatives get an electronic 4x4 system that apportions torque to slipping wheels, as required. 170mm limits its off-road range, though. Low-profile tyres and rough gravel roads also don't mix well. So it's good for good gravel, a wee bit of mud, and tar. **LW choice:** 2.0 Premium. **Also look at:** Kia Sportage, Nissan Qashqai, Ford Kuga, VW Tiguan



H-1	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
2.4 wagon GLS	439 900	4/2.4	126/6000	224/4200	10.2
2.5CRDi wagon GLS	519 900	4/2.5TD	120/3800	392/2000	9.8



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Service plan: 5 years / 90 000 km

Fuel tank: 75 litres. **Average sales per month:**

n/a » The H1 is getting on in life, but if you are in the market for something big, refined and with a generous amount of standard equipment, it's still worth looking at. The turbocharged diesel engine is preferred as the petrol powertrain is underpowered and very thirsty. **LW choice:** The 2,5 turbodiesel. **Also look at:** Chrysler Grand Voyager, Kia Grand Sedona



ISUZU Toll free 0800 422 777 Website www.isuzu.co.za

KB	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
Extended Cab					
250D-Teq LE	327 800	4/2.5TD	85/3600	280/1800	7.7
300D-Teq LX	391 600	4/3.0TD	130/3600	380/1800	7.8
300D-Teq LX auto	405 100	4/3.0TD	130/3600	380/1800	7.7
300D-Teq 4x4 LX	449 200	4/3.0TD	130/3600	380/1800	7.9
Double Cab					
250D-Teq LE	401 500	4/2.5TD	85/3600	280/1800	7.7
250D-Teq 4x4 LE	424 400	4/2.5TD	85/3600	280/1800	7.9
300D-Teq LX	445 700	4/3.0TD	130/3600	380/1800	7.8
300D-Teq LX auto	460 300	4/3.0TD	130/3600	380/1800	7.7
300D-Teq LX Serengeti	468 400	4/3.0TD	130/3600	380/1800	7.8
300D-Teq LX Serengeti auto	494 300	4/3.0TD	130/3600	380/1800	7.7
300D-Teq 4x4 LX	505 600	4/3.0TD	130/3600	380/1800	7.9
300D-Teq 4x4 LX Serengeti	522 600	4/3.0TD	130/3600	380/1800	7.9

SANTA FE	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
2.2CRDi Premium	564 900	4/2.2TD	145/3800	436/1800	8.0
2.2CRDi 4WD Elite	644 900	4/2.2TD	145/3800	436/1800	8.3

Service plan: 5 years / 90 000 km

Fuel tank: 64 litres. **Average sales per month:**

n/a » Hyundai's Santa Fe is powered by the same 2,2-litre turbodiesel engine that did service in the previous range, so it gets 145 kW/436 Nm. A new addition is a FWD only model, and the six-speed automatic gearbox is standard across the range. It's also loaded with standard kit, including the latest in electronic safety systems. The latest Santa Fe has 185mm ground clearance – down 15mm from the previous generation Santa Fe's 200mm. With its on-demand 4x4 system (on the top models), the lack of low-range and an on-road bias for the suspension, the Santa Fe is now even more limited to gravel, and a tiny bit of mud and sand. **LW choice:** 2.2CRDi Premium. **Also look at:** Kia Sorento, Toyota Fortuner



INFINITI Toll free 0800 771 771 Website www.infiniti.co.za

QX50	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
3.0d	596 949	V6/3.0TD	175/3750	550/1750	8.5
3.0d GT	637 824	V6/3.0TD	175/3750	550/1750	8.5
3.0d GT Premium	679 230	V6/3.0TD	175/3750	550/1750	8.5
3.7 GT	629 070	V6/3.7	235/7000	360/5200	12.2
3.7 GT Premium	670 476	V6/3.7	235/7000	360/5200	12.2

Maintenance plan: 5 years / 100 000 km

Fuel tank: 80 litres. **Average sales per month:** n/a »

Infiniti's EX medium-sized crossover has been renamed to the QX50. It offers a lot of luxury, and decent engines, but can Infiniti coax buyers out of their German vehicles? A good vehicle, but probably too pricey for its own good. **LW Choice:** 3.0d GT. **Also look at:** Audi Q5, BMW X3, Land Rover Discovery Sport, Lexus NX, Volvo XC60



QX70	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
3.7 GT	734 000	V6/3.7	235/7000	360/5200	12.3
3.7 GT Premium	794 000	V6/3.7	235/7000	360/5200	12.3
3.7 S	779 000	V6/3.7	235/7000	360/5200	12.3
3.7 S Premium	839 000	V6/3.7	235/7000	360/5200	12.3
3.7 S Black	852 500	V6/3.7	235/7000	360/5200	12.3
3.0d GT	765 500	V6/3.0TD	175/3750	550/1750	9.0
3.0d GT Premium	816 500	V6/3.0TD	175/3750	550/1750	9.0
3.0d S	801 500	V6/3.0TD	175/3750	550/1750	9.0
3.0d S Premium	861 500	V6/3.0TD	175/3750	550/1750	9.0
3.0d S Black	875 000	V6/3.0TD	175/3750	550/1750	9.0
5.0 S Premium	935 000	V8/5.0	287/6500	500/4400	13.1

Maintenance plan: 5 years / 100 000 km

Fuel tank: 90 litres. **Average sales per month:** 6 »

Like the QX50, the QX70 faces an uphill battle. It is undoubtedly a very sporty and refined SUV, but its price places it in the same category as the German brands. If you want something different but still impressive, the QX70 is worth a look. **LW choice:** 3.0d GT. **Also look at:** BMW X5/X6, Land Rover Range Rover Sport, Porsche Cayenne, Volvo XC90



QX80	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
5.6	1 265 000	V8/5.6	298/5800	560/4000	14.8

Service plan: 5 years / 100 000 km

Fuel tank: 98 litres **Average sales per month:** 5 »

The Infiniti QX80 is a humungous vehicle with a price tag to match. At the price it's certainly not cheap, but it offers better value for money than all of its main competitors. The 5,6-litre V8 is an absolute joy. It has loads of torque low down in the rev range, making it perfect for dune driving. The noises it makes are also lovely to listen to. It does consume an awful lot of fuel, though. **LW choice:** only one model **Also look at:** Land Rover Range Rover, Lexus LX, Mercedes Benz GL



Service plan: 5 years / 90 000 km

Fuel tank: 80 litres. **Average sales per month:** 543

(June) » For the most part, this is an all-new KB, though it uses the previous generation's D-Teq engine. Not that this is necessarily a bad thing, mind you, since the engine is tough, capable and dependable. With its tough underpinnings, low-range gearing and rear diff lock, the KB can run with the best double cabs. The only thing that it lacks is stability control, which is found in most of the latest double cabs. **LW choice:** 250 D-Teq 4x4 LE. **Also look at:** Toyota Hilux, Nissan Navara, Mitsubishi Triton, Ford Ranger



JEEP Toll free 0800 1333 55 Website www.jeep.co.za

RENEGADE	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
1.6L Longitude	340 990	4/1.6	81/5500	152/4500	6.0
1.4L T Limited	375 990	4/1.4T	103/5000	230/1750	6.0
1.6L Multijet Limited	389 990	4/1.6TD	88/3750	320/1750	4.6
2.4L 4x4 Trailhawk	435 990	4/2.4	137/6250	232/3900	9.8
1.4L T 4x4 Limited	450 990	4/1.4T	125/5500	250/2500	6.9

Maintenance plan: 3 years / 100 000 km

Fuel tank: 48 litres. **Average sales per month:** 75

» The Renegade is a new sort of Jeep for a new sort of customer. Sure, it still boasts rugged off-road styling, but this is an SUV more at home in an urban environment than out in the bundu. More off-road oriented versions will arrive later on, but for now the Renegade is available in 4x2 only. Still, it can handle some pretty ugly gravel roads, so it should be a popular choice amongst trendy weekend warriors. It is (very) pricey, but finishes are undeniably premium. While the styling is Jeep, everything underneath is basically a Fiat 500X. The vehicle is even built in Italy. **LW Choice:** 1.4 Limited. **Also look at:** MINI Countryman, Nissan Qashqai



COMPASS	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
2.0L Limited	377 990	4/2.0	115/6300	190/5100	7.6
2.0L Limited auto	390 990	4/2.0	115/6300	190/5100	8.2

Maintenance plan: 3 years / 100 000 km

Fuel tank: 51 litres. **Average sales per month:** 60

» The Compass looks reasonably sporty and seems to be well-equipped for the price, but the two-litre engine battles a bit at Highveld altitude. Price is good though. Jeep makes no pretensions of this Compass being a pukka 4x4. It is front-wheel driven, with 205mm ground clearance and traction control – so it can get you to a few 4x4-ish places, but it is much happier on a gravel road than a 4x4 track. **LW choice:** A Hemi V8 version? Pretty please? **Also look at:** Mitsubishi Outlander, Subaru Forester



PATRIOT	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
2.4L Limited	376 990	4/2.4	125/6000	220/4500	8.5
2.4L Limited auto	391 990	4/2.4	125/6000	220/4500	9.0

Maintenance plan: 3 years / 100 000 km

Fuel tank: 80 litres. **Average sales per month:** 1. »

The Patriot shares its platform and underpinnings with the Compass, but in a chunkier, more manly package. The electronic 4x4 system provides more grip on wet roads, on sand and in mud. But that's the extent of the Patriot's 4x4 abilities. **LW choice:** 2.4L Limited. **Also look at:** Mitsubishi Outlander, VW Tiguan, Toyota Rav4



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WRANGLER	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
3.6L Sahara	484 990	V6/3.6	209/6350	347/4300	11.0
3.6L Rubicon	509 990	V6/3.6	209/6350	347/4300	11.4
3.6L Rubicon X	541 990	V6/3.6	209/6350	347/4300	11.4
Unlimited					
3.6L Sahara	529 990	V6/3.6	209/6350	347/4300	11.7
3.6L Altitude	542 990	V6/3.6	209/6350	347/4300	11.7
3.6L Rubicon	554 990	V6/3.6	209/6350	347/4300	11.9
3.6L Rubicon X	579 990	V6/3.6	209/6350	347/4300	11.9
2.8CRD Sahara	589 990	4/2.8TD	147/3600	460/1600	8.3

Maintenance plan: 3 years / 100 000 km
Fuel tank: 70 litres. **Average sales per month:** 65. >> The Wrangler has genuine go-anywhere abilities, a turbodiesel engine option, an electronic stability programme and traction control, the option of four doors, and reasonably good quality. The latest generation V6 petrol engine has done wonders for eradicating that archaic driving experience of older Wranglers. Overall the Wrangler is still iconic, legendary, and looks just like it did before. But, it's now just way better! The Rubicon models, with even lower low-range gears, front and rear diff locks, a solid axle at both ends and heavy-duty rock rails, really can 4x4! **LW choice:** Unlimited 3.6L Rubicon. **Also look at:** Toyota Land Cruiser 70 / FJ Cruiser, Land-Rover Defender, Rooikat armoured vehicle



CHEROKEE	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
2.4L Longitude	500 990	4/2.4	130/6400	229/3900	8.3
3.2L Limited	536 990	V6/3.2	200/6500	315/4300	9.5
3.2L 4x4 Limited	592 990	V6/3.2	200/6500	315/4300	10.0
3.2L 4x4 Trailhawk	654 990	V6/3.2	200/6500	315/4300	10.0

Maintenance plan: 6 years / 100 000km
Fuel tank: 60 litres **Average sales per month:** 108. >> Jeep's popular Cherokee has undergone a very dramatic reinvention. The latest model looks nothing like its predecessor, and is based on the same underpinnings as the Dodge Dart, which means it is essentially a crossover. The new Cherokee is also available in FWD. That said, the vehicle is apparently still very capable off road, with the "Trail Rated" Trailhawk model sporting low-range gearing, good ground clearance and all sorts of off-road aids. Build quality is truly excellent, but this increase in quality is reflected in the pricing. The Cherokee is a very pricey compact SUV. **LW choice:** 3.2 FWD Limited. **Also look at:** BMW X3, Land Rover Discovery Sport, Subaru Forester, Audi Q5, Lexus NX, Infiniti QX50, Volvo XC60



GRAND CHEROKEE	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
3.6L Limited	724 990	V6/3.6	210/6350	347/4300	10.4
3.6L Overland	799 990	V6/3.6	210/6350	347/4300	10.4
3.6L Summit	885 990	V6/3.6	210/6350	347/4300	10.4
3.0CRD Limited	829 990	V6/3.0TD	179/3600	569/1800	7.5
3.0CRD Overland	899 990	V6/3.0TD	179/3600	569/1800	7.5
3.0CRD Summit	985 990	V6/3.0TD	179/3600	569/1800	7.5
5.7L Overland	835 990	V8/5.7	259/5200	520/4200	13.0
SRT	1 099 990	V8/6.4	344/6250	624/4100	14.0

Maintenance plan: 6 years / 100 000 km.
Fuel tank: 94 litres. **Average sales per month:** 203. >> Jeep's Grand Cherokee is big, bold and capable. In fact, it boasts almost all the bells and whistles you'd find in the BMW X5 and Discovery 4. The new family face as well as an updated, eight-speed gearbox were added in August 2013, with the engine line-up and drive train unchanged. **LW choice:** 3.6 Overland. **Also look at:** BMW X5, Land Rover Discovery / Range Rover Sport, Mercedes-Benz-AMG GLE, Volvo XC90



JMC Tel 011 668 0300 Website: www.jmcsa.co.za

JMC VIGUS	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
2.4 LX	239 990	4/2.4	95/5300	201/4000	10.2
2.4 SLX	269 990	4/2.4	95/5300	201/4000	10.2
2.4 4x4 LX	305 990	4/2.4	95/5300	201/4000	10.7
2.4TDCi LX	269 990	4/2.4TD	88/3800	290/1600	8.0
2.4TDCi SLX	299 990	4/2.4TD	88/3800	290/1600	8.0
2.4TDCi 4WD LX	335 990	4/2.4TD	88/3800	290/1600	8.2
2.4TDCi 4WD SLX	365 990	4/2.4TD	88/3800	290/1600	8.2

Service plan: 5 year / 60 000km
Fuel tank: 68-74 litres **Average sales per month:** 7 >> The Vigus is JMC's best product yet, but it's still not on par with the mainstream double-cab bakkies, nor a few other Chinese



products. If price is the main consideration, then it's definitely worth looking at. The engines are based on powertrains that have been around for years. They're down on power compared to the competitors, but at least you know the engine is going to last. **LW choice:** a diesel 4x4 **Also look at:** Foton Tunland, SsangYong Actyon Sports, used Hilux or Ranger.

KIA Tel 011 457 0200 Website: www.kia.co.za

SPORTAGE	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
2.0 Ignite	342 995	4/2.0	116/6200	192/4000	8.7
2.0	372 995	4/2.0	116/6200	192/4000	8.7
2.0 auto	385 995	4/2.0	116/6200	192/4000	8.9
2.0CRDi	402 995	4/2.0TD	130/4000	382/1800	6.7
2.0CRDi auto	415 995	4/2.0TD	130/4000	392/1800	7.3
2.0CRDi Tec auto	434 995	4/2.0TD	130/4000	392/1800	7.3
2.0 AWD	407 995	4/2.0	116/6200	192/4000	8.7
2.0 AWD auto	420 995	4/2.0	116/6200	192/4000	8.9
2.0CRDi AWD	437 995	4/2.0TD	130/4000	382/1800	6.7
2.0CRDi AWD auto	450 995	4/2.0TD	130/4000	392/1800	7.3
2.0CRDi AWD Tec auto	469 995	4/2.0TD	130/4000	392/1800	7.3
2.0CRDi AWD Explore	491 995	4/2.0TD	130/4000	392/1800	7.3

Service plan: 5 years / 100 000 km **Fuel tank:** 55 litres. **Average sales per month:** n/a >> The latest Sportage is a great vehicle. Smart, good looking, safe,

luxurious... it's got it all. Sharing its underpinnings with the Hyundai ix35, the Kia has, like the Hyundai, lost a bit of its off-road character in favour of improved on-road performance. Pricing is extremely competitive, and some of Kia's more mainstream opposition must be a little bit worried about the latest wave of Kia products. With only 172 millimetres ground clearance and no low-range, the 4x4 models are more suited to slippery roads than driving through dongas. On gravel it is okay, but the trendy low-profile tyres are not very happy on rough surfaces. **LW choice:** 2.0 Ignite. **Also look at:** Hyundai ix35, Nissan Qashqai, Volkswagen Tiguan



SORENTO	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
2.4 LS	379 995	4/2.4	127/6000	225/4000	9.2
2.2CRDi LX	499 995	4/2.2TD	147/3800	440/1750	6.7
2.2CRDi AWD EX	599 995	4/2.2TD	147/3800	440/1750	6.7
2.2CRDi AWD SX	634 995	4/2.2TD	147/3800	440/1750	6.8

Service plan: 4 years / 90 000 km (LS)

Fuel tank: n/a. **Average sales per month:** n/a

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Jnr Tent to Fit 1.45m(h) - **R10110-00**
Snr Tent to Fit 1.6m(h) - **R13910-00**

SAHARA LODGE
8 x 3m - **R15410-00**

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3m x 3.33m x 2.2m - **R4110-00**
DELUXE 6m x 3m 2.8m - **R9010-00**

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SNR 3m x 2.8m x 2.3m - **R2110-00**
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— a great package. **LW choice:** Diesel five-seater, but the entry-level petrol model offers a lot of car at the price. **Also look at:** Chevrolet Captiva, Hyundai Santa Fe

GRAND SEDONA	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
2.2CRDi EX	499 995	4/2.2TD	147/3800	440/1750	8.0
2.2CRDi EX 11-seat	515 995	4/2.2TD	147/3800	440/1750	8.0
2.2CRDi SX	615 995	4/2.2TD	147/3800	440/1750	8.0
2.2CRDi SXL	669 995	4/2.2TD	147/3800	440/1750	8.0
3.3 V6 SX	605 995	V6/3.3	199/6000	318/5200	10.9
3.3 V6 SXL	649 995	V6/3.3	199/6000	318/5200	10.9

Maintenance plan: 5 years / 100 000 km

Fuel tank: n/a **Average sales per month:** n/a

» This is the latest large MPV on the block and perhaps the best one yet. Available in seven- and 11-seat guise with the option of either a diesel or petrol V6 engine, the Kia caters for large families who like to travel in comfort and style. It's well equipped and has a five-star safety rating. **LW choice:** seven-seater diesel **Also look at:** Chrysler Grand Voyager, Mercedes V-Class



LAND ROVER Toll free 0860 110 090 Website www.landrover.co.za

DEFENDER	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
90 TD station wagon S	543 800	4/2.2TD	90/3500	360/2000	10.0
90 TD station wagon Heritage	605 500	4/2.2TD	90/3500	360/2000	10.0
90 TD station wagon Adventure	658 300	4/2.2TD	90/3500	360/2000	10.0
110 TD station wagon S	583 200	4/2.2TD	90/3500	360/2000	11.1
110 TD station wagon Heritage	667 300	4/2.2TD	90/3500	360/2000	11.1
110 TD station wagon Adventure	704 700	4/2.2TD	90/3500	360/2000	11.1
110 TD S	602 400	4/2.2TD	90/3500	360/2000	11.1
130 TD crew cab E	611 300	4/2.2TD	90/3500	360/2000	11.1

Service plan: None **Fuel tank:** 60 litres for Defender 90; 75 litres for Defender 110/130..

Average sales per month: 35. » The Defender is now powered by a 2,2-litre four-cylinder turbodiesel engine with emissions that conform to Euro V standards. Still, it's a Defender, so you also get that gap between some panels, and the handling in corners is not exactly dynamic. But off-road, it still rates as one of the best. It's a legend in its own time. The permanently four-wheel-driven Defender is just about as good as it gets. In the past the lack of a standard rear diff lock was it's only downfall on axle twisters, but with the advent of the advanced traction control system, it doesn't stop. Well... mostly not. The new 2,2-litre engine is also up to the off-road task. **LW choice:** 110 station wagon. **Also look at:** Toyota Land Cruiser 70, Jeep Wrangler, a Sherman tank?



DISCOVERY SPORT	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
TD4 S	545 901	4/2.2TD	110/3500	400/1750	6.0
SD4 S	595 020	4/2.2TD	140/3500	420/1750	6.3
Si4 S	598 200	4/2.0T	177/5800	340/1750	8.3
SD4 SE	640 320	4/2.2TD	140/3500	420/1750	6.3
Si4 SE	643 500	4/2.0T	177/5800	340/1750	8.3
SD4 HSE	697 020	4/2.2TD	140/3500	420/1750	6.3
Si4 HSE	700 200	4/2.0T	177/5800	340/1750	8.3
SD4 HSE Luxury	736 120	4/2.2TD	140/3500	420/1750	6.3
Si4 HSE Luxury	739 300	4/2.0T	177/5800	340/1750	8.3

Maintenance plan: 5 years / 100 000km **Fuel tank:** 65 litres **Average sales per month:** 94 »

The Land Rover Freelander is no more. Instead, we now have the Discovery Sport – a vehicle that is sportier and more stylish than its predecessor. The Freelander was never a phenomenal sales success for Land Rover SA, but the Disco Sport appears set to follow in the prosperous footsteps of the full-size Discovery, Evoque and Range Rover Sport. The Disco Sport isn't a hardcore 4x4, but it is an excellent all-round SUV – offering a good mix of on-road and off-road performance. If you're looking for a compact SUV that can play in the dirt, the Disco Sport is worth looking at. **LW choice:** SD4 S. **Also look at:** Jeep Cherokee, BMW X3, Subaru Forester, Volvo XC60



RANGE ROVER EVOQUE	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
SD4 SE	680 922	4/2.2TD	140/3500	420/1750	6.3
Si4 SE	710 090	4/2.0T	177/5500	340/1750	8.3
SD4 HSE Dynamic	815 622	4/2.2TD	140/3500	420/1750	6.3
Si4 HSE Dynamic	844 790	4/2.0T	177/5500	340/1750	8.3
coupé SD4 HSE Dynamic	815 212	4/2.2TD	140/3500	420/1750	6.2

coupé Si4 HSE Dynamic	844 790	4/2.0T	177/5500	340/1750	8.3
SD4 Autobiography	865 622	4/2.2TD	140/3500	420/1750	6.3
Si4 Autobiography	894 790	4/2.0T	177/5500	340/1750	8.3

Maintenance plan: 5 years / 100 000 km

Fuel tank: 58 litres for SD4; 70 for Si4.

Average sales per month: 112. » Stylish and fashionable, the baby Range Rover can actually go the off-road mile too. Classy, luxurious, trendy, seriously good looking – the Evoque is a fashion model for the road and dirt. Sure, it doesn't have low range, but it gets the brand's Terrain Response system, as well as at least 215mm ground clearance, and electronic tricks such as hill descent control. Add lots of horses to the package, and the Evoque can stay with at least a Freelander in a tough off-road environment. And that's pretty good! **LW choice:** SD4. **Also look at:** Porsche Macan, BMW X4, Infiniti QX50



DISCOVERY	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
TDV6 XS	731 386	V6/3.0TD	155/4000	520/1500	8.8
SDV6 S	874 886	V6/3.0TD	183/4000	600/2000	8.8
SCV6 SE	928 529	V6/3.0S	250/6500	450/3500	12.0
SDV6 SE	929 286	V6/3.0TD	183/4000	600/2000	8.8
SCV6 HSE	1 024 429	V6/3.0S	250/6500	450/3500	12.0
SDV6 HSE	1 025 286	V6/3.0TD	183/4000	600/2000	8.8

Maintenance plan: 5 years / 100 000 km **Fuel tank:** 82 litres for TDV6/SDV6; 86 for SCV6

Average sales per month: 114. » Building on the impressive Disco III, with an even better 4x4 system, the Disco 4 is more competent on road and low quality has been addressed in the latest two versions. So, is Disco 4 now perfect? Well, it's very, very close. Armed with Landy's comprehensive and now updated Terrain Response System and air suspension (XS model has coil springs), the Disco can go anywhere, anytime. Nuff said. It is one of the best off-roader and on-road combination packages on the market today. **LW choice:** TDV6 XS. **Also look at:** Mercedes-Benz GLE, VW Touareg, Toyota Land Cruiser Prado, Volvo XC90



RANGE ROVER SPORT	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
SCV6 S	983 074	V6/3.0S	250/6500	450/3500	11.3
TDV6 S	1 007 631	V6/3.0TD	183/4000	600/2000	7.9
SCV6 SE	1 080 774	V6/3.0S	250/6500	450/3500	11.3
SDV6 SE	1 167 031	V6/3.0TD	215/4000	600/2000	7.9
SCV6 HSE	1 279 774	V6/3.0S	250/6500	450/3500	11.3
SDV6 HSE	1 394 531	V6/3.0TD	215/4000	600/2000	7.9
SCV6 HST	1 393 074	V6/3.0S	280/6500	450/3500	11.3
Supercharged HSE Dynamic	1 521 023	V8/5.0S	375/6000	625/2500	13.8
SDV8 HSE Dynamic	1 531 383	V8/4.4TD	250/3500	740/1750	8.7
Supercharged Autobiography Dynamic	1 664 323	V8/5.0S	375/6000	625/2500	13.8
SDV8 Autobiography Dynamic	1 675 283	V8/4.4TD	250/3500	740/1750	8.7
SVR	1 923 125	V8/5.0S	405/6000	680/3500	13.8

Maintenance plan: 5 years / 100 000 km **Fuel tank:** 85 litres for SDV6; 105 for other

Average sales per month: 104. » The latest Range Rover Sport is a huge step up from the previous model in all aspects. The first Sport was based on the underpinning of the Disco, making it more of a Disco Sport than a Range Sport, really. The new one, though, is very impressive. It is lighter, sportier, prettier and far more plush than the old one. A real competitor in its segment. **LW choice:** SDV6 HSE. **Also look at:** Porsche Cayenne, Mercedes-Benz/AMG GLE, BMW X5/X6, Jeep Grand Cherokee, Volvo XC90



RANGE ROVER	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
TDV6 Vogue	1 572 578	V6/3.0TD	190/4000	600/2000	8.6
SDV8 Vogue SE	1 879 483	V8/4.4TD	250/3500	740/1700	8.7
Supercharged Vogue SE	1 936 525	V8/5.0S	375/6000	625/2500	13.8
SDV8 Autobiography	2 113 483	V8/4.4TD	250/3500	740/1700	8.7
Supercharged Autobiography	2 170 325	V8/5.0S	375/6000	625/2500	13.8

Range Rover L	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
L SDV8 Autobiography	2 202 283	V8/4.4TD	250/3500	740/1700	8.7
L Supercharged Autobiography	2 259 125	V8/5.0S	375/6000	625/2500	13.8
L SDV8 SVAutobiography	3 038 483	V8/4.4TD	250/3500	740/1700	8.7
L Supercharged SVAutobiography	3 181 225	V8/5.0S	405/6000	680/2500	13.8

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Maintenance plan: 5 years / 100 000 km
Fuel tank: 85 litres for TDV6; 105 for other
Average sales per month: 31. >> It's as extravagant as a 100-person philharmonic orchestra, as elegant as the Queen herself, yet it is also as resilient as Bear Grylls when the going gets tough. It's the new Range Rover, now sporting an all-aluminium monocoque construction, and it is as decadent and as capable as ever. It has more technology than the Airbus A380, and enough plush luxury to keep Prince Charles happy. Moreover, it has all the gadgets and gears, and can go anywhere. But, even if that Lotto ticket comes through, we wouldn't want to test the Rangy's ultimate capabilities on a rough 4x4 track. It may get scratched! **LW choice:** SDV8 Autobiography. **Also look at:** Porsche Cayenne, Mercedes-Benz GL, Infiniti QX80, Lexus LX, Audi Q7



and ground clearance is a rather middling 195mm, but it'll be able to handle dirt roads. Price is its most attractive feature, but competition in this segment of the market is becoming rather stiff. **LW choice:** We'd probably go for the Scorpio Pik-Up. **Also look at:** Mahindra Scorpio Pik-Up, GWM Steed 5, Tata Xenon

QUANTO	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
2.2CRDe	214 995	4/2.2TD	89/4000	290/1600	7.6

Service plan: 3 years / 60 000 km **Fuel tank:** 55 litres. **Average sales per month:** 4

>> The Quanto is Mahindra's attempt at a funky compact SUV in the mould of the Fiat Panda. Predictably, it doesn't have an AWD system, which keeps cost down, but there's still a lot of competition around R200 000 mark. **LW choice:** A Scorpio. **Also look at:** GWM M4, Ford EcoSport, Renault Duster



LEXUS Tel 011 809 9111 Website www.lexus.co.za

NX	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
200t E	539 900	4/2.0T	175/4800	350/1650	7.9
200t EX	579 900	4/2.0T	175/4800	350/1650	7.9
200t F-Sport	659 900	4/2.0T	175/4800	350/1650	7.9
300h EX	633 000	4/2.5e	145e	210+e	6.0

Maintenance plan: 4 years / 100 000km
Fuel tank: 60 litres. **Average sales per month:** 57. >> Lexus' latest vehicle – the NX – is a compact and very stylish SUV. It has bold and aggressive styling that is sure to be controversial, but is undeniably eye-catching. Since this is a Lexus, its cabin is a joy to spend time in, and boasts every creature comfort imaginable. Shortcomings? Well, there are no diesel engines on offer. However, its turbopetrol mill is a great one. The Lexus NX isn't a hardcore 4x4, but it is a great fashion accessory. It even comes with its own little make-up mirror in the centre console! **LW choice:** NX 200t EX. **Also look at:** BMW X3 / X4, Land Rover Discovery Sport / Range Rover Evoque, Audi Q5, Jeep Cherokee, Volvo XC60



RX	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
350 EX	734 100	V6/3.5	204/6200	346/4700	10.6
450h SE	932 600	V6/3.5e	220e	±550e	6.3

Maintenance plan: 4 years / 100 000 km
Fuel tank: 72 litres for 350; 65 for 450h
Average sales per month: 4. >> The latest Lexus RX is sleeker and more sophisticated than ever before. It was never designed for driving up Baboon's Pass, but instead offers an immensely classy and outstanding driving experience on tar, and a little bit of gravel. Anyone who wants to know what the term "refinement" means, just needs to take a spin in an RX. The hybrid offers the best of several worlds. We used to say that the RX, with its electronic 4x4 system, is only good on gravel. But after the hybrid version conquered Sani Pass we have to concede – it's still no pukka 4x4, but it certainly went places we never thought it could. **LW choice:** 450h SE. **Also look at:** BMW X5/X6, Mercedes-Benz GLE, Infiniti QX70, Volvo XC90



LX	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
570 SE	1 364 400	V8/5.7	270/5600	530/3200	14.8

Maintenance plan: 4 years / 100 000 km
Fuel tank: 93 litres. **Average sales per month:** 4 >> If a Toyota Land Cruiser 200 is not quite posh and exclusive enough for you, here's the answer: the Lexus LX570. Essentially a Cruiser 200 under different sheet metal, with all the off-road goodies, this super-Cruiser features Lexus-ised styling, a new badge, and quite a lot more horsepower from a 5,7-litre V8 petrol engine, to fit in with the more upmarket "Lexus image". Luxury, performance and capability is out of the top drawer, as is refinement. **Also look at:** Infiniti QX80, Toyota Land Cruiser 200, Land Rover Range Rover, Mercedes-Benz GL



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GENIO DOUBLE CAB	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
Double Cab					
2.2CRDe	219 995	4/2.2TD	89/4000	290/1600	7,9

Service plan: 3 years / 100 000km. **Average sales per month:** n/a. >> **Fuel tank:** 74 litres Arguably more workhorse than leisure vehicle, the Genio will nevertheless appeal to some looking for a family bakkie. It's got two rows of seating, a reasonably spacious loading area and Mahindra's impressive 2,2-litre mHawk engine. It doesn't have a 4x4 system,



SCORPIO	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
Pik-Up					
2.5TCI	233 995	4/2.5TD	74/3800	258/1800	9.9
2.5TCI 4x4	261 995	4/2.5TD	74/3800	258/1800	9.9
2.2CRDe	254 995	4/2.2TD	89/4000	290/1600	8.8
2.2CRDe Adventure	287 995	4/2.2TD	89/4000	290/1600	8.8
2.2CRDe 4x4	281 995	4/2.2TD	89/4000	290/1600	8.8
2.2CRDe 4x4 Adventure	311 995	4/2.2TD	89/4000	290/1600	8.8
SUV					
2.2CRDe VLX	249 995	4/2.2TD	89/4000	290/1600	8.8
2.2CRDe VLX Adventure	275 995	4/2.2TD	89/4000	290/1600	8.8
2.2CRDe 4x4 VLX	289 995	4/2.2TD	89/4000	290/1600	8.8
2.2CRDe 4x4 VLX Adventure	315 995	4/2.2TD	89/4000	290/1600	8.8

Service plan: 3 years / 60 000 km. **Fuel tank:** 60 litres. **Average sales per month:** 84. >> Still

costing a fraction of the Big Name SUV prices, the Scorpio range offers a budget-priced alternative in the SUV and double cab markets. The new Adventure models are real value-for-money overlanders with bull bars, roof racks and more. An auto rear diff lock, shift-on-the-fly 4x4 selection, low-range gearing and a torque-laden engine means that for your money, you get decent off-roading ability. **LW choice:** Pik-Up 2.2CRDe 4x4. **Also look at:** Tata Xenon, GWM Steed, Mahindra Bolero



XUV500	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
2.2CRDe W4	259 995	4/2.2TD	103/3750	330/1600	7.1
2.2CRDe W6	299 995	4/2.2TD	103/3750	330/1600	7.1
2.2CRDe W8	329 995	4/2.2TD	103/3750	330/1600	7.1
2.2CRDe W8 AWD	349 995	4/2.2TD	103/3750	330/1600	7.1



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Service plan: 3 years / 60 000 km

Fuel tank: 70 litres. **Average sales per month:**

43. >> Mahindra's compact SUV offering offers a surprising amount of car for the money. Sure, the styling is quirky and different, but the engine and gearbox, combined with loads of standard features and kit make up for the quirkiness. It's not intended as a bundu basher and while the AWD system comes with a list of driver aids, it's not fitted with a low-range box. **LW choice:** 2.2 W8 4x2. **Also look at:** GWM H5



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BT-50	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
FreeStyle Cab					
2.2 SLX	307 300	4/2.2TD	110/3700	375/1500	7.7
3.2 SLE	350 400	5/3.2TD	147/3000	470/1750	9.3
3.2 SLE auto	362 400	5/3.2TD	147/3000	470/1750	9.1
3.2 4x4 SLE	402 400	5/3.2TD	147/3000	470/1750	9.8
Double Cab					
2.2 SLE	370 400	4/2.2TD	110/3700	375/1500	7.7
3.2 SLE	402 400	5/3.2TD	147/3000	470/1750	9.3
3.2 SLE auto	412 400	5/3.2TD	147/3000	470/1750	9.1
3.2 4x4 SLE	454 400	5/3.2TD	147/3000	470/1750	9.8
3.2 4x4 SLE auto	466 400	5/3.2TD	147/3000	470/1750	9.7

Service plan: 3 years / 90 000 km

Fuel tank: 80 litres. **Average sales per month:**

131. >> Mazda's new BT-50 may share its tough underpinnings with the Ford Ranger, but is clearly aimed more at the leisure than the workhorse market. The top-end models get all the latest safety and luxury kit. The styling polarizes opinions, but underneath it's just as capable as the other double cab bakkies in the leisure market. **LW choice:** 3.2 SLE auto. **Also look at:** Toyota Hilux, Ford Ranger, VW Amarok



CX-5	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
2.0 Active	319 500	4/2.0	121/6000	210/4000	6.4
2.0 Active auto	329 300	4/2.0	121/6000	210/4000	6.4
2.0 Dynamic	329 600	4/2.0	121/6000	210/4000	6.4
2.2DE Active	378 300	4/2.2TD	110/4500	380/1800	5.7
2.5 Individual	408 700	4/2.5	141/5700	256/3250	6.9
2.2DE AWD Akera	465 400	4/2.2TD	129/4500	420/2000	5.9

Service plan: 3 years / unlimited km

Fuel tank: 56 litres. **Average sales per month:**

226. >> The Mazda CX-5 used to be the rather forgettable SUV, but a recent model revision has changed all that. The range now includes entry-level FWD models, as well as a diesel AWD derivative. It's very good on tar, but the inclusion of an AWD model means it's now much better when the going gets tough. Quality and space are on par with competitor vehicles. **LW choice:** 2.2 DE Akera AWD. **Also look at:** Mitsubishi ASX, Nissan Qashqai, Hyundai ix35, Kia Sportage



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GLA	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
GLA200	440 849	4/1.6T	115/5300	250/1250	5.9
GLA200 auto	458 747	4/1.6T	115/5300	250/1250	5.9
GLA200CDI	465 000	4/2.1TD	100/3400	300/1400	4.5
GLA200CDI auto	483 000	4/2.1TD	100/3400	300/1400	4.5
GLA220CDI 4Matic	538 631	4/2.1TD	125/3400	350/1400	5.1
GLA250 4Matic	614 288	4/2.0T	155/5500	350/1200	6.6
GLA45 AMG 4Matic	790 843	4/2.0T	265/6000	450/2250	7.5

Maintenance plan: 6 years / 100 000 km. **Fuel**

tank: 50 litres for GLA200, 200CDI; 56 litres for 220CDI, 250 and 45 AMG **Average sales per month:** n/a. >> All the models based on the A-Class hatch have been a massive success so far and we have little reason to believe that it'll be any different for the GLA. It's quite expensive, but it seems to be worth the money. **LW choice:** GLA 220 CDI 4Matic. **Also look at:** Audi Q3 / RS Q3, BMW X1, MINI Countryman, Subaru XV, Volvo V40 CrossCountry



V-CLASS	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
V200CDI	695 981	4/2.1TD	100/3800	330/1200	6.5
V200CDI auto	719 981	4/2.1TD	100/3800	330/1200	6.1
V220CDI	726 875	4/2.1TD	120/3800	380/1400	6.1
V220CDI auto	750 875	4/2.1TD	120/3800	380/1400	5.9
V250 BlueTec	782 416	4/2.1TD	140/3800	440/1400	6.0

V220CDI Avantgarde	949 175	4/2.1TD	120/3800	380/1400	5.9
V250 BlueTec Avantgarde	984 196	4/2.1TD	140/3800	440/1400	6.0

Maintenance plan: 6 years / 100 000 km

Fuel tank: 75 litres. **Average sales per month:**

n/a. >> The V-Class is the ultimate large MPV and has the price to match. It's as luxurious as you'd expect and the ride quality is exceptional. It has seating for seven with enough space left over for a massive boot. The V-Class is not as much fun to drive as other Mercedes models, but it's marvellous to be a passenger. **LW choice:** 250CDI Avantgarde. **Also look at:** Grand Voyager, Volkswagen Caravelle, Kia Grand Sedona



GL	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
GL350 BlueTec	1 163 031	V6/3.0TD	190/3600	620/1600	8.0
GL500	1 324 387	V8/4.7T	320/5250	700/1800	11.5
GL63 AMG	1 991 537	V8/5.5T	410/5250	760/2000	12.3

Maintenance plan: 6 years / 100 000 km

Fuel tank: 100 litres. **Average sales per**

month: n/a. >> If you like super-size meals, super-size houses, and super-size swimming pools, the super-size GL may be just your thing. Since it was originally supposed to replace Merc's Gelandewagen 4x4, it gets all the tricks in the off-roading book. Ground clearance is 307mm and the Airmatic air suspension means it goes just about anywhere. It is also big on luxury and safety. Performance is plentiful too. **LW choice:** GL350 BlueTec. **Also look at:** Infiniti QX80, Lexus LX, Audi Q7, Land Rover Range Rover



G-CLASS	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
G300CDI Professional	1 053 986	V6/3.0TD	135/3800	400/1600	11.7
G350 BlueTec	1 398 255	V6/3.0TD	155/3400	540/1600	11.2
G500	1 564 393	V8/5.5	285/6000	530/2800	14.9
G63 AMG	2 131 625	V8/5.5T	400/5500	760/2000	13.8

Maintenance plan: None for G300; 6 years/

100 000 km for G350/G500/G63. **Fuel tank:**

96 litres. **Average sales per month:** n/a. >> As the preferred 4x4 for a vast number of military organisations across the globe, the Merc's off-road pedigree and durability is legendary. This is as good as it gets. Recently Mercedes added two more models to range – including the 400 kW G63 AMG model. You got to ask: do you really want so much power in a G-wagon? Still, it goes anywhere, with front, centre and rear diff locks, low-range that's selectable on the move, a 600mm forging depth, Merc's 4ETS traction control system and enough ground clearance to clear just about anything. **LW choice:** G350 BlueTec. **Also look at:** A Second World War Panzerkampfwagen VI Tiger tank



MINI Toll free 0800 600 111 Website www.mini.co.za

MINI COUNTRYMAN	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
Cooper	343 283	4/1.6	90/6000	160/4250	6.5
Cooper auto	362 748	4/1.6	90/6000	160/4250	7.6
Cooper S	404 488	4/1.6T	140/5500	260/1700	6.6
Cooper S auto	423 543	4/1.6T	140/5500	260/1700	7.5
John Cooper Works ALL4	501 272	4/1.6T	160/6000	300/2100	8.0
John Cooper Works ALL4 auto	518 890	4/1.6T	160/6000	300/2100	8.3

Maintenance plan: 3 years / 75 000 km

Fuel tank: 47 litres. **Average sales per month:** 42

>> A MINI gets five doors and the option of four-wheel drive. Spacious, as trendy as anything you can think of, and pretty fast too, this Mini offers a lot of car for young jet setters. Of course, it's not a 4x4 that can tackle a tough off-road course. Rather just the muddy patch at the school's soccer field, with 149mm of ground clearance and a permanent all-wheel drive system with plenty of assist programmes. Oh, and it's expensive too. **LW choice:** Cooper S. **Also look at:** BMW X1, Nissan Juke, Opel Mokka, Audi Q3, Mercedes-Benz GLA, Fiat 500X, Honda HR-V



PACEMAN	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
Cooper S	404 488	4/1.6T	140/5500	260/1700	6.6
Cooper S auto	423 543	4/1.6T	140/5500	260/1700	7.5
John Cooper Works ALL4	501 272	4/1.6T	160/6000	300/2100	8.0
John Cooper Works ALL4 auto	518 890	4/1.6T	160/6000	300/2100	8.3

Maintenance plan: 3 years / 75 000 km

Fuel tank: 47 litres. **Average sales per month:**

4. >> MINI's answer to the Evoque, the Paceman is the company's first "Sports Activity Coupe". While it's very similar to the Countryman it does have its own character, and with the ALL4



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drivetrain offers quite a dynamic drive. Not truly meant for off-road but quite adept at traversing sticky or rutted roads, the Paceman is typically feature-packed and dynamic to drive. **LW choice:** Cooper S. **Also look at:** Land Rover Range Rover Evoque Coupé, Nissan Juke

MITSUBISHI Tel 011 552 6000 Website www.mitsubishi-motors.co.za

ASX	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
2.0 GL	299 900	4/2.0	110/6000	197/4200	7.5
2.0 GLX	334 900	4/2.0	110/6000	197/4200	7.5
2.0 GLS	347 900	4/2.0	110/6000	197/4200	7.5
2.0 GLS auto	359 900	4/2.0	110/6000	197/4200	7.4

Service plan: 5 year / 90 000 km

Fuel tank: 63 litres. **Average sales per month:**

91. ➤ The funky ASX is aimed squarely at the lifestyle segment, and for now only front-wheel drive is available. It is loaded with kit, it is safe as houses, it has reasonable performance, and traction control with hill start assist on the GLS models. It's not incapable, but a true soft-roader with great space and user-friendly features. **LW choice:** 2.0 GL. **Also look at:** Jeep Compass, Nissan Juke, Citroen C4 Aircross



TRITON	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
2.5DI-D ClubCab	299 900	4/2.5TD	100/3500	314/2000	8.2
2.5DI-D double cab	359 900	4/2.5TD	100/3500	314/2000	8.3
2.5DI-D 4x4 double cab	429 900	4/2.5TD	131/4000	400/2000	8.6

Service plan: 5 years / 100 000 km for 4x2;

5 years / 90 000 km for 4x4 **Fuel tank:** 75 litres..

Average sales per month: 19. (June) ➤ If one looks past the love-it-or-hate-it styling cues, the Triton is a solid and dependable option in the leisure bakkie market. Pricing remains competitive, and with standard low-range and a rear diff lock, it can keep up with any 4x4 double cab bakkie on the trail. An all-new Triton arrives mid 2015. **LW choice:** 2.5DI-D 4x4 double cab. **Also look at:** Toyota Hilux, Isuzu KB, Nissan Navara



OUTLANDER	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
2.4 GLS Exceed	439 900	4/2.4	123/6000	222/4100	8.2

Service plan: 3 years / 90 000 km

Fuel tank: 60 litres. **Average sales per month:**

13. ➤ Mitsubishi's Outlander recently received a minor facelift. As with the previous model, a petrol powerplant is your only option. It's not built for serious off-roading, but it can handle the odd ugly dirt road thanks to its 4WD system. Mitsubishi SA has always struggled to sell the Outlander, which is a shame, since it's a solid vehicle that offers good value for money. The new model's design is, well, unique, so some might be put off a bit, but overall, this is a solid compact SUV. **LW Choice:** We'll take it. **Also look at:** Subaru Forester, Toyota RAV4, Nissan X-Trail



PAJERO SPORT	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
2.5DI-D auto	449 900	4/2.5TD	131/4000	350/1800	8.5
2.5DI-D 4x4	484 900	4/2.5TD	131/4000	400/2000	7.8
2.5DI-D 4x4 auto	499 900	4/2.5TD	131/4000	350/1800	8.5

Service plan: 5 years / 90 000 km. **Fuel tank:**

70 litres. **Average sales per month:** 11. ➤ The Triton-based Pajero Sport has just received a new engine. The old 3,2-litre Di-D engine has been replaced with a 2,5-litre diesel mill that develops 131 kW of power and 400 Nm of torque (the auto model only has 350 Nm, for some reason). With loads of space, second- and third-row seating that fold completely flat, and a comfy three-link coil setup at the back, the Pajero Sport offers good value for money in a segment that is dominated by the Fortuner. At the moment, the Sport is available only in 4x4 guise, but a 4x2 model will hit showroom floors before the end of the year. **LW choice:** DI-D 4x4 manual. **Also look at:** Toyota Fortuner, Chevrolet Trailblazer, Land Rover Discovery Sport



PAJERO	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
3-door 3.2DI-D GLS	579 900	4/3.2TD	140/3800	441/2000	10.1
5-door 3.2DI-D GLS	649 900	4/3.2TD	140/3800	441/2000	10.1
5-door 3.2DI-D GLS Exceed	669 900	4/3.2TD	140/3800	441/2000	10.1

Maintenance plan: 5 years / 100 000 km

Fuel tank: 69 litres for 3-door; 88 for 5-door

Average sales per month: 44. ➤ The big Mitsubishi is consummately reliable, able and 99,9% of the time up to the task at hand. Nevermind great space, kit and features, the



Super Select 4WD-II system allows for 4x4 engagement at speeds of up to 100 km/h. In 4H a viscous coupling unit and centre diff can direct drive to the front wheels if the rear wheels lose traction. The centre diff can be locked for enhanced traction on slippery surfaces (4HLc), and a low-range option (4LLc) is for really tough stuff. Add a lockable diff at the back, and 235mm ground clearance... just watch those flashy side-steps. **LW choice:** 3.2 DI-D GLX 5-door. **Also look at:** Land Rover Discovery, VW Touareg, Toyota Land Cruiser Prado

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JUKE	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
1.2T Acenta	258 700	4/1.2T	85/4500	190/2000	5.6
1.2T Acenta+	282 100	4/1.2T	85/4500	190/2000	5.6
1.5dCi Acenta+	304 400	4/1.5TD	81/4000	260/1750	4.2
1.6T Tekna	330 800	4/1.6T	140/5600	240/1600	6.0
1.6T Tekna Techno	360 200	4/1.6T	140/5600	240/1600	6.0
1.6T 4WD Tekna	370 300	4/1.6T	140/5600	240/1600	6.5

Service plan: 3 years / 90 000 km

Fuel tank: 46 litres. **Average sales per month:**

53. ➤ On the 'cool' metre the new Juke is about on the same level as the new Range Rover Evoque, yet it sells for less than half the price.

The 140 kW version is one of the most surprisingly adept performance cars we've driven for a while. Ground clearance is only 180mm, so while they are a lot of fun on dirt roads, they're not trail vehicles. A 4WD version has recently been added to the line-up. **LW choice:** 1.5dCi Acenta+. **Also look at:** MINI Countryman/Paceman, Opel Mokka, Peugeot 2008, Fiat 500X, Honda HR-V



QASHQAI	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
1.2T Visia	287 500	4/1.2T	85/4500	190/2000	6.2
1.2T Acenta	317 800	4/1.2T	85/4500	190/2000	6.2
1.2T Acenta auto	334 200	4/1.2T	85/5200	165/1750	6.2
1.5dCi Acenta	338 800	4/1.5TD	81/4000	260/1750	4.2
1.6T Acenta	364 800	4/1.6T	120/5600	240/2000	6.2
1.6dCi Acenta auto	392 100	4/1.6TD	96/4000	320/1750	4.9
1.6dCi AWD Acenta	393 400	4/1.6TD	96/4000	320/1750	5.3

Service plan: 5 years / 90 000km

Fuel tank: 65 litres. **Average sales per**

month: 236. ➤ Nissan has replaced its

popular Qashqai with an all-new model. Will it sell as well as its predecessor? We think so.

The Qashqai still offers great value for money, with solid engine options and loads of practicality. Luggage space could be a little



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bit better, but overall, the Qashqai is a solid package. The new model also looks sportier and more attractive than the old model, so we're willing to bet Nissan has another winner on its hands. **LW Choice:** 1.5 dCi Acenta. **Also look at:** Honda CR-V, Ford Kuga, VW Tiguan, Toyota RAV4, Mazda CX-5, Peugeot 2008

NP300 HARDBODY	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
2.5TDi Hi-rider	341 500	4/2.5TD	98/3600	304/2000	8.8
2.4 Hi-rider	322 400	4/2.4	105/5600	205/3600	11.0
2.4 4x4	389 500	4/2.4	105/5600	205/3600	11.7

Service plan: 3 years / 90 000 km

Fuel tank: 75 litres. **Average sales per month:**

95 (June). **>>** The older Nissan Hardbody, rebadged the NP300, has been re-employed to cater for the entry-level double cab market, with attractive prices to match. It may be old, but it's far from cold, and still offers a lot of dependable bakkie at an attractive price. The 4x4 version gets low-range and a limited slip rear diff, and tough-as-nails underpinnings. So it can go the off-road mile, its only limiting factor being the L/S rear diff, instead of a locking version. **LW choice:** 2.5TDi. **Also look at:** Toyota Hilux, Isuzu KB, GWM Steed



X-TRAIL	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
2.0 XE	327 700	4/2.0	102/5200	198/4400	8.3
2.5 4x4 SE	364 200	4/2.5	125/6000	226/4400	8.3
1.6dCi XE	351 000	4/1.6TD	96/4000	320/1750	5.1
1.6dCi 4x4 SE	388 300	4/1.6TD	96/4000	320/1750	5.3
1.6dCi 4x4 LE	473 600	4/1.6TD	96/4000	320/1750	5.3

Maintenance plan: 5 years/90 000km

Fuel tank: 60 litres. **Average sales per month:**

323. **>>** The X-Trail has undergone a very thorough exterior makeover. Gone is the boxy design of the old model, replaced with a sleek and sexy new exterior. That said, though, Nissan hasn't fiddled with its winning formula too much. The new X-Trail offers everything the old one did, but in a shiny and fancier package. A bunch of 4x2 models are available, but you can opt for a 4x4 version if you plan on tackling some gravel roads. Not a real off-roader, but a very practical family leisure vehicle. **LW choice:** 1.6 dCi SE. **Also look at:** Kia Sorento, Hyundai Santa Fe, Toyota RAV4, Honda CR-V



NAVARA	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
KingCab					
2.5dCi XE	362 100	4/2.5TD	106/4000	356/2000	8.7
2.5dCi 4x4 XE	406 400	4/2.5TD	128/4000	403/2000	9.0

Double Cab					
2.5dCi XE	379 700	4/2.5TD	106/4000	356/2000	8.7
2.5dCi 4x4 XE	430 600	4/2.5TD	128/4000	403/2000	9.0
2.5dCi LE	448 300	4/2.5TD	128/4000	403/2000	8.3
2.5dCi 4x4 LE auto	514 100	4/2.5TD	140/4000	450/2000	9.0
3.0dCi V6 4x4 LE	659 500	V6/3.0TD	170/3750	550/1750	9.3

Service plan: 3 years / 90 000 km

Fuel tank: 80 litres **Average sales per**

month: 136. (June) **>>** It is a big and powerful double-cab bakkie, with a comfortable SUV-like ride, and spacious cabin. It looks pretty good too. The 4x4 versions get all the right gizmos, like low range and rear diff lock. If the pilot knows his or her stuff, the Navara can walk the walk with the best of the double cab brigade. **LW choice:** 2.5 dCi 4x4 LE. **Also look at:** Ford Ranger, Toyota Hilux, Isuzu KB, Mitsubishi Triton



PATROL	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
3.0Di GL	605 000	4/3.0TD	118/3600	380/2000	10.8
4.8 GRX	698 000	6/4.8	190/4800	425/3600	17.7

Service plan: 3 years / 90 000 km

Fuel tank: 135 litres. **Average sales per**

month: n/a. **>>** The legendary Patrol is incredibly capable off-road, comfortable as a long-distance cruiser, and features on many wish lists of ardent overlanding enthusiasts. But it's also somewhat impractical to use as daily transport, thanks to its sheer size, and its affection for especially petrol. **LW choice:** 4.8 GRX. **Also look at:** Toyota Land Cruiser 200, Mitsubishi Pajero



OPEL Toll free 0800 422 777 Website www.opel.co.za

MOKKA	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
1.4 Turbo Enjoy	288 500	4/1.4T	103/4900	200/1850	6.0
1.4 Turbo Enjoy auto	298 500	4/1.4T	103/4900	200/1850	6.6

1.4 Turbo Cosmo	325 500	4/1.4T	103/4900	200/1850	6.0
1.4 Turbo Cosmo auto	335 500	4/1.4T	103/4900	200/1850	6.6

Service plan: 5 years / 90 000km **Fuel tank:**

53 litres. **Average sales per month:** 188. **>>**

The Opel Mokka is the German manufacturer's first attempt at building a compact SUV and it has done a pretty decent job. The engine is powerful, yet frugal and the cabin is a class above its direct competitors. It's available in front-wheel drive only, which means you're better off staying on the tar. **LW choice:** 1.4T Cosmo. **Also look at:** Ford EcoSport, Peugeot 2008, MINI Countryman, Nissan Juke



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2008	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
1.6 Active	249 900	4/1.6	88/6000	160/4250	5.9
1.6 Allure	277 900	4/1.6	88/6000	160/4250	5.9

Maintenance plan: 5 years / 100 000 km

Fuel tank: 60 litres. **Average sales per**

month: 29. **>>** One of the latest compact crossover to hit SA's shores, but it won't be crossing over anything anytime soon. It's available as a FWD only, but it comes with a peppy 1.6-litre naturally aspirated engine and funky styling. **LW choice:** 1.6 Allure. **Also look at:** Ford EcoSport, Nissan Juke, Opel Mokka, Suzuki SX4, Fiat 500X, Honda HR-V



3008	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
1.6 Access	289 900	4/1.6	88/6000	160/4250	6.7
1.6T Active	339 900	4/1.6T	115/6000	240/1400	6.9
2.0HDi Allure	417 900	4/2.0TD	120/3750	340/2000	6.1

Maintenance plan: 5 years / 100 000 km

Fuel tank: 60 litres. **Average sales per**

month: 7 **>>** The versatile Peugeot 3008 was recently given a facelift and this has turned it into one of the most attractive crossovers on the market. It's definitely tuned for on-road performance, which means it's a comfortable daily companion. A wide range of engines is available, so there's something for everyone. **LW choice:** 2.0 HDi Allure. **Also look at:** Nissan Qashqai, Hyundai ix35, Honda CR-V



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MACAN	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
S diesel	884 000	V6/3.0TD	180/4000	580/1750	6.1
S	904 000	V6/3.0T	250/5500	460/1450	8.7
turbo	1 275 000	V6/3.6T	294/6000	550/1350	8.9

Maintenance plan: 3 years / 90 000 km

Fuel tank: 60 litres for S diesel; 65 for S;

75 for turbo. **Average sales per month:** 29.

>> The Macan sets a new benchmark in terms of dynamic abilities. It's closer to a sports car than any SUV has the right to be, but it's comfortable on the daily run. It's smaller than the Cayenne and almost as expensive, but you get more equipment as standard. **LW choice:** S diesel. **Also look at:** Audi Q5/SQ5, BMW X4, Land Rover Discovery Sport / Range Rover Evoque, Infiniti QX50, Lexus NX, Volvo XC60



CAYENNE	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
Cayenne	852 000	V6/3.6	220/6300	400/3000	9.2
diesel	933 000	V6/3.0TD	180/3800	550/1750	6.6
S	998 000	V6/3.6T	309/6000	550/1350	9.5
S e-hybrid	1 147 000	V6/3.0Se	306e	590e	3.4
S diesel	1 165 000	V8/4.1TD	283/3750	850/2000	8.0
GTS	1 176 000	V6/3.6T	324/6000	600/1600	9.8
turbo	1 779 000	V8/4.8T	382/6000	750/2250	11.2
turbo S	2 255 000	V8/4.8T	419/6000	800/2500	11.5

Maintenance plan: 3 years / 90 000 km

Fuel tank: 100 litres. **Average sales per**

month: 42 **>>** By now, the Cayenne has more than proven itself as a luxury off-roader. It has power, torque, space, gadgetry, driver aids and off-road aids that most could only dream of. It has air suspension, lockers and good articulation, so it's capable, even if most drivers don't use it to its limits. As a driver's vehicle, the handling, road hold, passenger comfort and ride quality are superb. **LW choice:** S diesel. **Also look at:** BMW X5/X6, Land Rover Range Rover Sport, Mercedes-Benz/-AMG GLE, Infiniti QX70, Volvo XC90



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DUSTER	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
1.6 Expression	213 900	4/1.6	75/5850	145/3750	7.5
1.6 Dynamique	229 900	4/1.6	75/5850	145/3750	7.5
1.5dCi Dynamique	252 900	4/1.5TD	80/3900	240/2250	5.0
1.5dCi Dynamique 4WD	269 900	4/1.5TD	80/3900	240/1750	5.3

Service plan: 3 years / 45 000km **Fuel tank:** 50 litres. **Average sales per month:** 436 >>

The Duster is the car responsible for the reinvigoration of the Renault brand in SA. It comes with a nippy diesel engine and a lot of kit as standard. The 4WD model is also one of the cheapest all-wheel drive cars available in this country. **LW choice:** 1.5 dCi Dynamique 4WD. **Also look at:** Ford EcoSport, GWM M4, Mahindra Quanto



CAPTUR	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
66kW turbo Expression	219 900	3/0.9T	66/5250	135/2500	4.9
66kW turbo Dynamique	239 900	3/0.9T	66/5250	135/2500	4.9
88kW turbo Dynamique auto	279 900	4/1.2T	88/4900	190/2000	5.4

Service plan: 5 years / 100 000 km

Fuel tank: 45 litres. **Average sales per month:** 311. >>

Arriving the same time as the all-new Citroën Cactus is the Renault Captur. And like the Cactus, the Captur is a funky little crossover built for hip and trendy urbanites. The Captur is available in 2WD only, and unlike the Renault Duster, isn't really designed for the bundu. This is a pretty and well equipped compact crossover built for those who want the space and trendiness of an SUV, but don't need the off-road ability. As with the Cactus, pricing is very competitive. **LW Choice:** Dynamique 88kW Turbo EDC. **Also look at:** Citroën C4 Cactus, Ford EcoSport, Peugeot 2008, Opel Mokka, Fiat 500X, Nissan Juke, Honda HR-V



KOLEOS	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
2.5 Dynamique	339 900	4/2.5	126/6000	226/4400	9.6
2.5 4x4 Dynamique	369 900	4/2.5	126/6000	226/4400	9.9
2.5 4x4 Dynamique auto	399 900	4/2.5	126/6000	226/4400	9.6

Service plan: 5 years / 100 000 km

Fuel tank: 65 litres. **Average sales per month:** 1. >>

With 206mm of ground clearance and the Nissan X-Trail's All-Mode 4x4 system, the Koleos can go surprisingly far off the beaten track. But, no low range and other locking bits ensure that real off-roading is also not its thing. It much prefers dirt roads to dongas. The diesel model is no longer sold here, but the range still offers good value for buyers looking for something with X-Trail capability and a bit of flair. **LW choice:** 2.5 Dynamique. **Also look at:** Honda CR-V, Toyota RAV4, Nissan Qashqai / X-Trail



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KORANDO	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
2.0	324 995	4/2.0	110/6000	197/4000	7.5

Service plan: 5 years / 90 000 km

Fuel tank: 57 litres. **Average sales per month:** 4 >>

The new Korando is a modern crossover, featuring a monocoque design, and an independent suspension set-up. The latest Korando, boasting minor upgrades, looks amazingly normal, and it is now distributed here by Mahindra SA. Although it is cheaper in some instances, the service plan has also shrunk. It has 180mm ground clearance, and in the AWD model the system normally sends all the power to the front wheels but as soon as wheelslip is detected the rear wheels also get a piece of the action. The driver can also lock the system in a 50/50 split at speeds slower than 40km/h. **LW choice:** D20T high auto. **Also look at:** Kia Sportage, Hyundai ix35



ACTYON SPORTS	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
2.3 4x4 high	289 995	4/2.3	110/5500	214/3500	12.4
2.0D high	309 995	4/2.0TD	114/4000	360/1500	7.4
2.0D 4x4 Deluxe	359 995	4/2.0TD	114/4000	360/1500	7.5

Service plan: 5 years / 90 000 km

Fuel tank: 75 litres. **Average sales per month:** n/a. >>

With upgraded looks and new engine options, the Actyon Sports is a highly competitive and capable double cab bakkie, although its load carrying capacity puts it below the rest. It's comfortable, has a good stability program and can be very dynamic off-road. It's not mean for trail driving, however, and can tackle medium grade courses with its low-range gearing. It's also great in sand and mud. **LW choice:** 2.0D high. **Also look at:** Tata Xenon, GWM Steed, Mahindra Scorpio



REXTON W	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
RX270XDi	394 995	5/2.7TD	121/4000	340/1800	8.6
RX270XDi Deluxe	449 995	5/2.7TD	121/4000	340/1800	9.0

Service plan: 5 years / 90 000 km. **Fuel tank:** 78

Average sales per month: n/a. >>

Ssangyong has updated their large SUV, a seven-seater with a part-time 4x4 drivetrain and plenty of modern features like Bluetooth and cruise control. Drive can be locked in four-high or low-range gearing, making it a well equipped, affordable option. It's undoubtedly better looking, but the previous Rexton's sales figures won't be hard to beat, and Ssangyong has a long way to go to convince buyers to get behind the wheel. The update does, however, see considerable improvement to the interior. **LW choice:** RX270XDi. **Also look at:** GWM H5 4x4, Mahindra XUV500



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XV	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
2.0i	317 300	b4/2.0	110/6200	196/4200	8.0
2.0i auto	328 600	b4/2.0	110/6200	196/4200	7.9
2.0i-S	364 600	b4/2.0	110/6200	196/4200	7.9

Maintenance plan: 3 years / 75 000 km

Fuel tank: 60 litres. **Average sales per month:** >>

The funky XV, which is based on the Impreza hatch, is really cool piece of four-wheel driven kit. With the new models, it's highly competitive, and surprisingly capable off-road for a soft-roader. It's not as dynamic a drive as you might expect from Subaru, but it's a unique offering in a very competitive segment, with 220mm ground clearance and Subaru's highly capable all-wheel drive system. **LW choice:** 2.0i. **Also look at:** Mitsubishi ASX, Mercedes-Benz GLA



FORESTER	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
2.0 X	349 000	b4/2.0	110/6200	198/4200	7.2
2.5 X	385 300	b4/2.5	126/5800	235/4100	8.1
2.5 XS	419 200	b4/2.5	126/5800	235/4100	8.1
2.5 XS Premium	462 500	b4/2.5	126/5800	235/4100	8.1
2.0 XT	539 300	b4/2.0T	177/5600	350/2400	8.5

Maintenance plan: 3 years / 75 000 km **Fuel tank:** 65 litres. **Average sales per month:** 47 >>

The good-looking Forester has just been refreshed and it's a dream to drive. The Forester has already won the hearts of many loyal fans, and



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with good reason. It's got great quality, practicality and the turbocharged XT is SUV performance heaven. It handles well both on and off-road, and the new X-Mode gives it a slight edge in the rough over the previous model. They've also spent a lot on developing a more fuel efficient Forester, which is bound to pay off in the sales department. **LW choice:** 2.5 XS. **Also look at:** Suzuki Grand Vitara, Nissan X-Trail

OUTBACK	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
2.5i-S Premium	479 000	b4/2.5	129/5800	235/4000	7.3
2.0D Premium	529 000	b4/2.0TD	110/3600	350/1600	6.3
3.6 R-S Premium	529 000	b6/3.6	191/6000	350/4400	9.9

Service plan: 3 year / 75 000km. **Fuel tank:** 70 litres. **Average sales per month:** 13. >>

The new Outback continues to build on the reputation of the models that came before it. It's still practical, safe, luxurious and very well built. The new model's styling is a massive leap forward, but Subaru has played it safe in the engines department by carrying over all of the powertrains used in the previous model. **LW choice:** 2.0-litre turbodiesel CVT. **Also look at:** Audi A4 allroad, Volvo V60 Cross Country / XC70



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JIMNY	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
1.3	228 400	4/1.3	63/6000	110/4100	7.2
1.3 auto	243 400	4/1.3	63/6000	110/4100	7.6

Service plan: 4 years / 60 000 km. **Fuel tank:** 40 litres. **Average sales per month:** 107. >> The Suzuki Jimny has a low-range transfer case, low weight, and a relatively powerful new 1.3-litre engine. Okay, so the Jimny is small, and it doesn't really enjoy long-distance trips. But, thanks to its size it makes light work of just about any 4x4 track. It is an economical runabout. It's luxurious and safe. Quality is good. We like it. A lot. Ground clearance is pegged at only 190mm, but thanks to the excellent approach and departure angles, small and nimble size, and tight turning circle, this won't affect the Jimny as much as it would a bigger vehicle. It can make a pukka 4x4 costing four times as much look rather silly on a tight 4x4 track. The only thing that may stop it is an axle twister – the Jimny does not have a rear diff lock or limited slip diff. **LW choice:** The Jimny, please! **Also look at:** Daihatsu Terios Off-road



SX4	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
1.6 GL	268 900	4/1.6	86/6000	156/4000	5.8
1.6 GLX	298 900	4/1.6	86/6000	156/4000	5.8
1.6 GLX auto	321 900	4/1.6	86/6000	156/4000	5.8
1.6 GLX AllGrip	322 900	4/1.6	86/6000	156/4000	6.2
1.6 GLX AllGrip auto	344 900	4/1.6	86/6000	156/4000	6.2

Service plan: 3 years / 90 000 km **Fuel tank:** 47 litres. **Average sales per month:** 28 >> The all-new Suzuki SX4 has landed, and it is quite a different vehicle to the outgoing model. It is sleeker, more refined, and quite a bit bigger. Overall, this is an impressive compact SUV that is well priced. It has loads of infotainment features, and even boasts top-notch safety features such as seven airbags. It is available with a CVT gearbox, but the manual is the one to go for. You probably won't be needing that 4WD system either, so the basic 4x2 model with the manual shifter should be your pick. Great value for money! **LW choice:** GLX manual. **Also look at:** Ford EcoSport, Mitsubishi ASX, Nissan Qashqai, Opel Mokka, Peugeot 2008, Fiat 500X, Honda HR-V



GRAND VITARA	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
2.4 Dune	331 900	4/2.4	122/6000	225/4000	8.9
2.4 Dune auto	346 900	4/2.4	122/6000	225/4000	9.9
2.4 Summit	401 900	4/2.4	122/6000	225/4000	8.9
2.4 Summit auto	417 900	4/2.4	122/6000	225/4000	9.9

Service plan: 6 years / 90 000 km **Fuel tank:** 66 litres. **Average sales per month:** 7 >> If compact SUVs were soccer players, the Grand Vitara would be English legend David Beckham. Just like Beckham, the Vitara is not only a trendy looker, but also surprisingly capable in its application. The Suzuki's permanent 4x4 system transfers the engine's urge to both front and rear wheels via a torque-sensitive, limited-slip centre differential. The system offers three driving modes: 4H, 4H-Lock, and 4L-Lock. Add 206mm ground clearance, good wheel travel, tough 4x4 underpinnings and a mighty impressive traction control system, and the Grand Vitara can go places where few small SUVs will dare. **LW choice:** 2.4 Summit. **Also look at:** Subaru Forester, Nissan Qashqai / X-Trail, Toyota RAV4



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XENON	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
3.0L DLE	199 995	4/3.0TD	85/3000	300/1800	10.0
XT 2.2L	259 995	4/2.2TD	110/4000	320/1500	9.0
XT 2.2L 4x4	294 995	4/2.2TD	110/4000	320/1500	9.0

Service plan: None for 3.0L; 5 years / 75 000 km for 2.2L and XT **Fuel tank:** 65 litres for 3.0L / 2.2L; 70 for XT. **Average sales per month:** 21. >>

What a difference the new, more modern 2.2-litre engine has made to the Xenon. The latest Xenon, now with about 300 improvements over the original model, is not perfect, but it can go the off-road mile, it can gobble up open-road kilometres, and it can handle the city slog too. It just does it in a less refined manner than say, a Hilux. But considering that it sells for half the price of a new Hilux... who needs refinement, anyway? **LW choice:** 2.2 4x4. **Also look at:** GWM Steed, Mahindra Scorpio Pick-Up, a used double-cab



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HILUX	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
Xtra Cab					
2.5D-4D SRX	309 300	4/2.5TD	75/3600	260/1600	n/a
3.0D-4D Raider Legend 45	387 300	4/3.0TD	120/3400	343/1400	n/a
3.0D-4D 4x4 Raider Legend 45	445 600	4/3.0TD	120/3400	343/1400	n/a
3.0D-4D Raider Dakar	393 100	4/3.0TD	120/3400	343/1400	n/a
3.0D-4D 4x4 Raider Dakar	451 400	4/3.0TD	120/3400	343/1400	n/a
Double Cab					
2.7 Raider Legend 45	391 300	4/2.7	118/5200	241/3800	10.8
2.7 Raider Dakar	396 700	4/2.7	118/5200	241/3800	10.8
2.5D-4D 4x4 SRX	413 000	4/2.5TD	75/3600	260/1600	8.7
2.5D-4D Raider Legend 45	426 400	4/2.5TD	106/3400	343/1600	8.0
2.5D-4D Raider Dakar	431 800	4/2.5TD	106/3400	343/1600	8.0
3.0D-4D Raider Legend 45	453 800	4/3.0TD	120/3400	343/1400	8.6
3.0D-4D Raider Legend 45 auto	467 900	4/3.0TD	120/3400	343/1400	9.7
3.0D-4D Raider Dakar	459 200	4/3.0TD	120/3400	343/1400	8.6
3.0D-4D Raider Dakar auto	473 300	4/3.0TD	120/3400	343/1400	9.7
3.0D-4D 4x4 Raider Legend 45	513 000	4/3.0TD	120/3400	343/1400	8.6
3.0D-4D 4x4 Raider Legend 45 auto	527 300	4/3.0TD	120/3400	343/1400	9.7
3.0D-4D 4x4 Raider Dakar	518 400	4/3.0TD	120/3400	343/1400	8.6
3.0D-4D 4x4 Raider Dakar auto	532 700	4/3.0TD	120/3400	343/1400	9.7
4.0 V6 Raider Legend 45	467 100	V6/4.0	175/5200	376/3800	12.0
4.0 V6 4x4 Raider Legend 45	552 800	V6/4.0	175/5200	376/3800	12.0
4.0 V6 Raider Dakar	472 500	V6/4.0	175/5200	376/3800	12.0
4.0 V6 4x4 Raider Dakar	558 200	V6/4.0	175/5200	376/3800	12.0



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Service plan: 5 years / 90 000km

Fuel tank: 80 litres. **Average sales per month:**

1 370 (June). >> The Hilux, now available in both Dakar and Legend45 guise, continues to be a big seller. Although the engines remain the same, the top double cab models now vitally get vehicle dynamic control (VDC) and traction control, to counter the VW Amarok and Ford Ranger. Whether it will keep on to sales remains to be seen, but the 4x4 versions have rear diff locks and low-range gearing, making it even more capable than before.

LW choice: 3.0 D-4D double cab 4x4 Raider. **Also look at:** Volkswagen Amarok, Nissan Navara, Ford Ranger, Isuzu KB



RAV4	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
2.0 GX	311 600	4/2.0	107/6200	187/3600	7.7
2.0 GX auto	322 400	4/2.0	107/6200	187/3600	7.4
2.2D-4D AWD GX	391 400	4/2.2TD	110/3600	340/2000	5.6
2.2D-4D AWD VX	471 400	4/2.2TD	110/3600	340/2000	6.5
2.5 AWD VX	441 900	4/2.5	132/6000	233/4100	8.5

Service plan: 5 years / 90 000 km

Fuel tank: 60 litres. **Average sales per month:**

597. >> The RAV4 has grown up a lot since it was first launched in 1994, giving birth to the entire compact SUV market. Now it's been restyled with a much anticipated update, and a wider price range that should open it open to a new range of buyers. **LW choice:** 2.2D-4D AWD GX. **Also look at:** Honda CR-V, Nissan Qashqai / X-Trail



FORTUNER	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
2.5D-4D	391 700	4/2.5TD	106/3400	343/1600	8.0
2.5D-4D auto	405 200	4/2.5TD	106/3400	343/1600	9.1
3.0D-4D	470 600	4/3.0TD	120/3400	343/1400	8.5
3.0D-4D auto	483 900	4/3.0TD	120/3400	343/1400	9.4
3.0D-4D Limited	470 600	4/3.0TD	120/3400	343/1400	8.5
3.0D-4D Limited auto	483 900	4/3.0TD	120/3400	343/1400	9.4
3.0D-4D 4x4	523 900	4/3.0TD	120/3400	343/1400	8.6
3.0D-4D 4x4 auto	537 500	4/3.0TD	120/3400	343/1400	9.8
3.0D-4D 4x4 Limited	523 900	4/3.0TD	120/3400	343/1400	8.6
3.0D-4D 4x4 Limited auto	537 500	4/3.0TD	120/3400	343/1400	9.8
4.0 V6	502 900	V6/4	175/5200	376/3800	12.7
4.0 V6 4x4	556 100	V6/4	175/5200	376/3800	13.0

Service plan: 5 years / 90 000 km **Fuel tank:**

80 litres. **Average sales per month:** 717.

>> SA's best-selling SUV has received an epic makeover, and more recently a spec upgrade - with black interiors! The best news for Joe Soap is the introduction of an entry-level 2.5D-4D 4x2 model. They may look new, but under the skin the Fortuner 4x4 models are still a rough and ready 4x4s. Thanks to its rugged Hilux underpinnings, it is near unstoppable in most conditions. Even the 4x2 models with standard rear diff lock will get farther on a tough off-road route than some other 4x4 vehicles. **LW choice:** 2.5D-4D 4x2. **Also look at:** Chevrolet Trailblazer, Land Rover Discovery Sport, Mitsubishi Pajero Sport



LAND CRUISER 70 SERIES	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
Double Cab					
79 4.0 V6	538 100	V6/4.0	170/5200	360/3800	13.6
79 4.2D	564 400	6/4.2D	96/3800	285/2200	13.0
79 4.5D-4D LX V8	633 800	V8/4.5TD	151/3400	430/1200	11.6
Wagon / Station Wagon					
78 4.2D wagon	551 300	6/4.2D	96/3800	285/2200	11.9
76 4.2D station wagon	577 300	6/4.2D	96/3800	285/2200	11.6
76 4.5D-4D LX V8 station wagon	648 100	V8/4.5TD	151/3400	430/1200	11.6

Service plan: None **Fuel tank:** 90+90 litres for

s/cab and wagon; 130 litres for d/cab and station wagon. **Average sales per month:** 328. >> The old-school Cruiser range is supremely robust, without any fancy electronic gizmos. Even though it is basic, you do get some luxuries like air-con, a navigation and entertainment system, and power windows. The long-awaited 79 double cab has now also landed, as has the much anticipated V8 D-4D motor. **LW choice:** 4.0 V6 double cab! And, um, shares in an oil company! **Also look at:** Landy Defender, Jeep Wrangler, Cruiser in a different colour.



FJ CRUISER	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
FJ Cruiser	516 500	V6/4.0	200/5600	380/4400	11.4
FJ Sport Cruiser	542 100	V6/4.0	200/5600	380/4400	11.4

Service plan: 5 years / 90 000 km **Fuel tank:**

72 + 87 litres **Average sales per month:** 16.

>> The retro-styled Cruiser not only looks good but also has real-world 4x4 ability, punchy performance from the 200kW V6 engine and a decently refined on-road ride too. With 245mm ground clearance, a pukka transfer case, ATRAC traction control, a rear differential lock, 700mm wading depth, excellent approach and departure angles and a 200 kW V6 engine, the FJ is amazingly capable off-road. **LW choice:** FJ Bruiser Cruiser by Rob Green Motorsport. **Also look at:** Jeep Wrangler, Land Rover Defender 90



LAND CRUISER PRADO	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
3.0DT TX	686 900	4/3.0TD	120/3400	400/1600	8.5
4.0 VX	782 300	V6/4	202/5600	381/4400	11.3
3.0DT VX	784 500	4/3.0TD	120/3400	400/1600	8.5

Service plan: 5 years / 90 000 km. **Fuel tank:** 87 + 63

(150) litres. **Average sales per month:** 128. >> It's comfortable, luxurious, should be reliable (it's a Toyota), and has all the 4x4 technology anyone could ask for. The powerful diesel engine finally fixes a Prado weakness, but it is still outgunned by its rivals. Like anything with a Land Cruiser badge, the Prado is a real 4x4. Permanent four-wheel drive, low-range, centre and rear diff locks, traction control, Hill Start Assist, Crawl Control and Multi-terrain. **LW choice:** 4.0 V6 TX. **Also look at:** Mitsubishi Pajero, Nissan Patrol, Land Rover Discovery, VW Touareg, Volvo XC90



LAND CRUISER 200	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
4.6 V8 VX	1 079 800	V8/4.6	227/5500	439/3400	13.9
4.5D-4D VX	1 108 800	V8/4.5TD	173/3200	615/1800	10.3

Service plan: 5 years / 90 000 km

Fuel tank: 93 litres. **Average sales per month:** 56

The big daddy of Toyota's Cruiser family has grown from a highly capable 4x4 into a premium luxury 4x4, and just received a features upgrade. It's still highly capable, but the big Cruiser now has a host of fancy electronics and gizmos. It is engineered to withstand the harshest of 4x4 conditions, despite being a five-star luxury vehicle. It is indeed capable of doing the hard yards. But has low range, a lockable centre diff and crawl mode for low-speed driving. But even with all the gadgets, it has lost some of its "let's head out into the bush" attraction. **LW choice:** 4.5D-4D VX. **Also look at:** Infiniti QX80, Lexus LX, Land Rover Range Rover, Mercedes-Benz GL



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CROSS CADDY	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
2.0TDI	343 300	4/2.0TD	81/4200	250/1750	5.7

Service/Maintenance plan: Optional

Fuel tank: 60 litres. **Average sales per month:** n/a.

>> The CrossCaddy hides its panel van roots very well. You get VW build quality, loads of equipment and sliding doors on both sides. It doesn't feel as big as other MPVs, but it's just as comfortable. The main weapon in its arsenal is the refined ride. It simply glides over bad surfaces. **LW choice:** Only one model **Also look at:** Renault Duster



TIGUAN	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
1.4TSI 90kW Trend&Fun	334 900	4/1.4T	90/5000	200/1500	6.5
1.4TSI 118kW Trend&Fun	371 200	4/1.4ST	118/5800	240/1750	6.7
1.4TSI 118kW Trend&Fun auto	387 200	4/1.4ST	118/5800	240/1750	7.1
2.0TDI Trend&Fun	362 500	4/2.0TD	81/2750	280/1750	5.3
2.0TDI 4Motion Trend&Fun	428 700	4/2.0TD	103/4200	320/1750	6.5
2.0TDI 4Motion Track&Field	454 000	4/2.0TD	103/4200	320/1750	6.5
2.0TDI 4Motion Sport&Style	468 100	4/2.0TD	103/4200	320/1750	6.5
2.0TSI 4Motion Sport&Style	490 400	4/2.0T	155/5100	280/1700	8.8

Maintenance plan: 5 years / 60 000 km

Fuel tank: 64 litres. **Average sales per month:**

194. >> The baby Touareg competes in the compact SUV segment, which has recently become very competitive. There's still a model for just about every need, and the Blue Motion models offer outstanding fuel consumption. The Tiguan is still a great all-rounder. With no low range, and a ground clearance of 200mm, the Tiguan is still a soft-roader. The Track&Field versions, which come with underbody protection, are the more rugged models with improved clearance, approach and departure angles. **LW choice:** 1.4TSI 4Motion Trend&Fun. **Also look at:** Toyota RAV4, Subaru Forester, Nissan Qashqai



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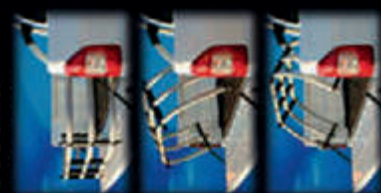
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AMAROK	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
2.0TDI Trendline	424 300	4/2.0TD	103/3500	340/1600	7.6
2.0TDI Trendline 4Motion	475 300	4/2.0TD	103/3500	340/1600	7.7
2.0BITDI Highline	454 700	4/2.0TD	132/4000	400/1500	7.9
2.0BITDI Highline auto	472 200	4/2.0TD	132/4000	420/1750	8.2
2.0BITDI Highline 4Motion	505 700	4/2.0TD	132/4000	400/1500	8.0
2.0BITDI Highline 4Motion auto	523 200	4/2.0TD	132/4000	420/1750	8.3

Service plan: 5 years / 90 000 km

Fuel tank: 80 litres. **Average sales per month:** 259 (June).

» The big German bakkie has been upsetting the Ford and Toyota fans by winning awards left right and centre, and its SUV-like cabin aim it squarely at the leisure market. It comes with ESP, Hill Start/hill descent, off-road ABS, traction control, electronic differential lock, a mechanical locking differential, and even a low-range transfer case. The Amarok can go the off-road mile, despite its size, and its towing capabilities have outshone the rest. The automatic Highline controversially has an eight-speed 'box with what is essentially a crawl gear, and no low-range 'box. **LW choice:** 2.0BITDI 4Motion. **Also look at:** Toyota Hilux, Nissan Navara, Ford Ranger, Isuzu KB



CALIFORNIA BEACH	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
2.0BITDI 4Motion	714 400	4/2.0TD	132/4000	400/1500	8.4
2.0BITDI 4Motion auto	732 900	4/2.0TD	132/4000	400/1500	8.8

Maintenance plan: 5 years / 60 000 km

Fuel tank: 80 litres. **Average sales per month:** n/a.

» Okay, this isn't your typical 4x4, but for certain outdoor enthusiasts, the VW California Beach is sure to make a lot of sense. If you're one of those "adventure types" who climb and surf and bike and hike, the California Beach might be your ultimate outdoor vehicle. It is spacious – spacious enough, literally – to camp in, and it has VW's 4Motion AWD system and an electronic differential lock, so it can go just about anywhere your adventures lead you. Its show-stopping party trick is a pop-up roof that turns the Kombi into a little house. **LW choice:** 4Motion auto. **Also look at:** An old-school VW Camper Van



TOUAREG	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
V6 Elegance	723 300	V6/3.6	206/6200	360/3200	10.9
V6 TDI Luxury	808 400	V6/3.0TD	180/4000	550/2000	7.2
V6 TDI Escape	834 400	V6/3.0TD	180/4000	550/2000	7.3
V8 TDI Executive	1 010 400	V8/4.1TD	250/4000	800/1750	9.1

Maintenance plan: 5 years / 100 000 km

Fuel tank: 100 litres. **Average sales per month:** 54.

» Filling the top-dog position in the line-up is a 250kW/800Nm 4.2-litre V8 TDI. A new eight-speed auto gearbox is standard – across the range. The 4Motion version gets permanent 4x4 with a limited-slip Torsen centre diff and electronic diff locks (EDS) on all four wheels, but no low-range gearing. The V6 TDI model is available in Escape guise, which adds low-range gearing, increased ground clearance, a locking centre diff and an optional rear diff. **LW choice:** V6 TDI. **Also look at:** Audi Q7, BMW X5, Infiniti QX70, Land Rover Discovery / Range Rover Sport, Lexus RX, Mercedes-Benz GLE, Toyota Land Cruiser Prado, Volvo XC90



VOLVO Phone: 012 450 4901 **Website:** www.volvocars.com/za

V40 CROSS COUNTRY	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
T4 Momentum	386 700	4/2.0T	140/4700	300/1300	5.5
T4 Momentum auto	405 600	4/2.0T	140/4700	300/1300	5.6
D3 Momentum	423 400	4/2.0TD	110/3750	320/1750	4.0
D4 Momentum	439 100	4/2.0TD	140/4250	400/1750	4.3
T5 AWD Momentum	474 800	4/2.0T	180/5500	350/1500	6.4

Maintenance plan: 5 years / 100 000 km

Fuel tank: 57 litres. **Average sales per month:** 13.

» The low-slung V40 Cross Country is an interesting alternative to all those crossovers out there at the moment. It's obviously not a hardcore 4x4, but there is the option of AWD in the top-end T5 Excel model, so the V40 can deal with a bad dirt road. Moreover, the V40 Cross Country looks good, is comfy and offers tons of packing space. Pricing is very competitive, and you even get a five-year maintenance plan as well. If you want a 4x4 that can tackle trails, this isn't the vehicle for you, but if you want a fun and practical ever-day car, the V40 is worth a look. **LW choice:** D4 Excel. **Also look at:** Audi A4 allroad, Mercedes-Benz GLA, BMW X1, MINI Countryman, Subaru XV



V60 CROSS COUNTRY	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
D4 AWD Momentum	499 900	5/2.4TD	140/4000	420/1500	5.7
T5 AWD Momentum	533 500	5/2.5T	187/5400	360/1800	8.5

Maintenance plan: 5 years / 100 000 km

Fuel tank: 68 litres. **Average sales per month:** 5.

» Like its smaller sibling, the V40 Cross Country, the V60 Cross Country offers an alternative to modern crossovers and compact SUVs. It still has AWD and a decent amount of ground clearance, but isn't designed for hardcore off-road duty. The V60 is more spacious than the V40 – offering a very impressive amount of luggage space – and boasts some truly wonderful styling. If you want an estate, but also want AWD and loads of space, the V60 Cross Country is worth looking at. It will undoubtedly make you stand out from the crowd. **LW choice:** D4 AWD. **Also look at:** Audi A4 allroad, Subaru Outback



XC70	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
D5 AWD Inscription	505 000	5/2.4TD	162/4000	440/1500	5.8

Maintenance plan: 5 years / 100 000 km

Fuel tank: 70 litres. **Average sales per month:** 5.

» The Volvo XC70 is more a station wagon on stilts than it is an SUV, but it's more capable than one might think. The interior is commodious and the diesel engine is powerful and frugal in equal measure. **LW choice:** Only one model in the line-up. **Also look at:** Audi A4 allroad, Subaru Outback



XC60	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
T5 Momentum	561 200	4/2.0T	180/5500	350/1500	6.7
D4 Momentum	565 800	4/2.0TD	140/4250	400/1750	4.7
D5 AWD Momentum	627 500	5/2.4TD	162/4000	440/1500	5.7
T6 Momentum	634 900	4/2.0ST	225/5700	400/2100	7.0

Maintenance plan: 5 years / 100 000 km

Fuel tank: 70 litres. **Average sales per month:** 26.

» Touted as the safest car in the world (and it probably is), the XC60 has moved the SUV goalposts for the Swedish brand. It's more modern and good-looking, yet still features all the qualities Volvo is renowned for. With a 230mm ground clearance, the XC60 is actually a competent off-roader, and you might find yourself heading towards a more challenging 4x4 track after the Swede dispatches of the soft-roader route without working hard at all. It has no low range, but Volvo's Instant Traction system sorts the traction details out. Hill descent control is also standard. **LW choice:** T6. **Also look at:** Subaru Forester, BMW X3, Audi Q5, Lexus NX, Land Rover Discovery Sport.



XC90	PRICE	ENGINE	POWER	TORQUE	L/100KM
D4 Momentum	804 000	4/2.0TD	140/4250	400/1750	5.3
D5 AWD Momentum	853 200	4/2.0TD	165/4250	470/1750	5.8
T5 AWD Momentum	827 400	4/2.0T	187/5500	380/1500	7.5
T6 AWD Momentum	867 000	4/2.0ST	235/5700	400/2200	8.0
T8 Twin Engine AWD Momentum	1 005 100	4/2.0STe	300e	640e	2.1

Maintenance plan: 5 years / 100 000 km

Fuel tank: 71 litres for D4 to T6; 50 for T8.

Average sales per month: 17. » The order books for the all-new Volvo XC90 are open and the first batch has already sold out. The XC90 is available only with four-cylinder engines, which is a first in this segment. It is, however, not down on power compared to its rivals and it will likely set new standards in fuel consumption and passenger safety in this segment. We haven't driven it yet, but it will likely be the new luxury SUV benchmark. **LW choice:** Still too early to tell, but the D5 AWD seems like a good buy. **Also look at:** Audi Q7, BMW X5, Infiniti QX70, Land Rover Discovery / Range Rover Sport, Lexus RX, Mercedes-Benz GLE, Toyota Land Cruiser Prado, Volkswagen Touareg



Average sales per month: n/a: no report on sales figures.

L/100km: Average consumption as per manufacturer.

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